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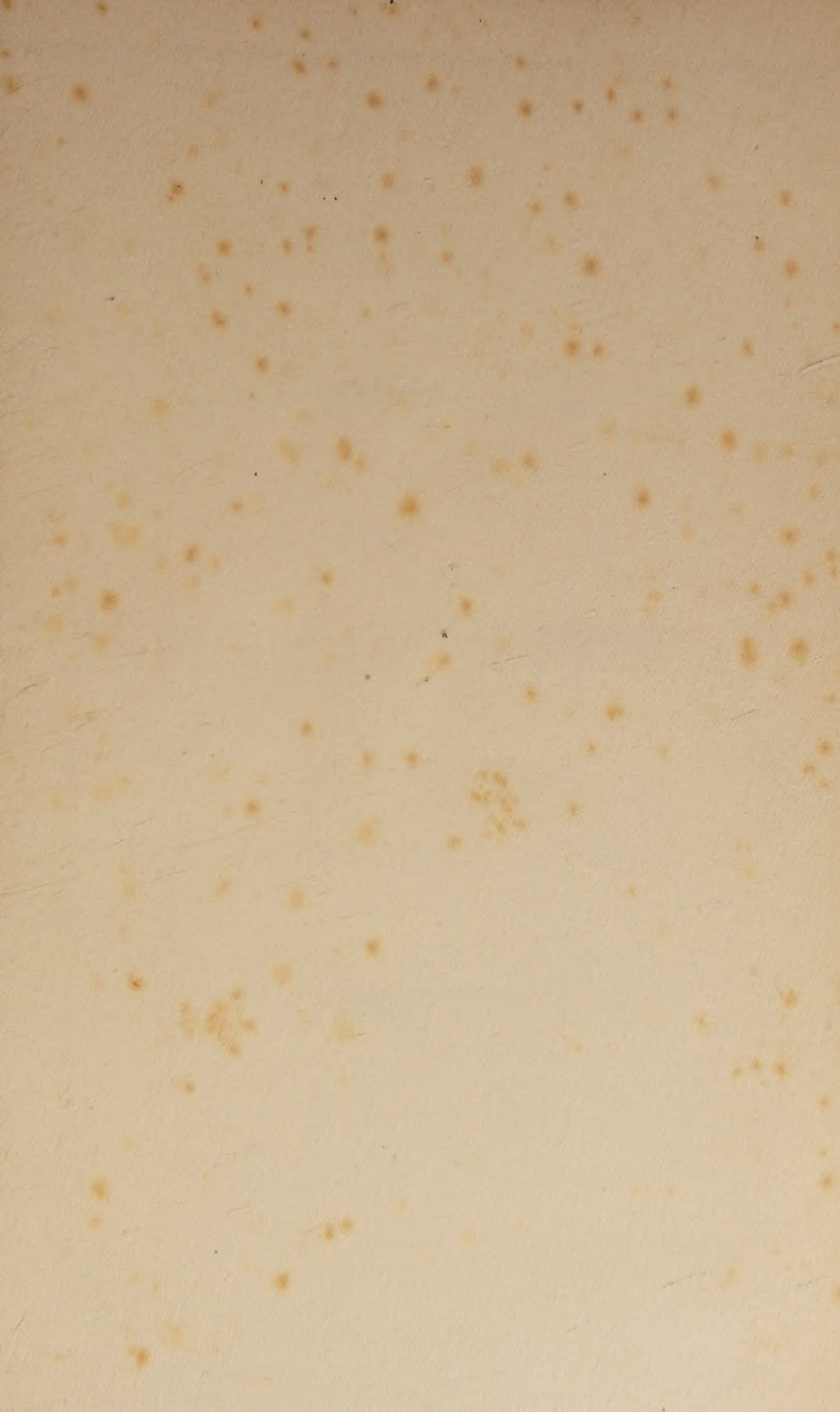
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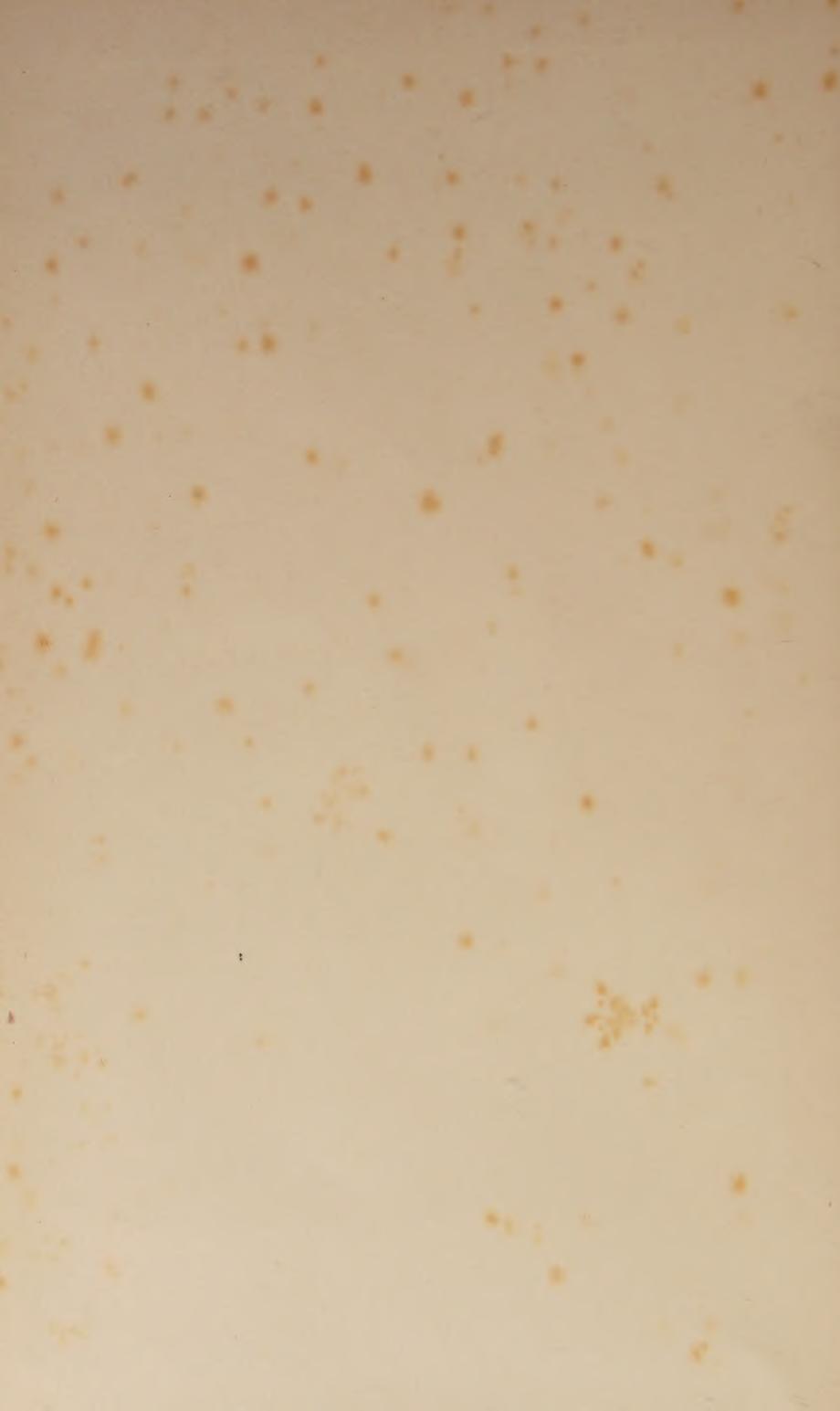
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THE
HISTORY OF PRESCOT

, . . BY . . .

F. G. PATERSON, B.A., OXON.



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PREFACE.

It is indeed hard to remember everyone to whom one is indebted in the compilation of a work like the present, but I cannot let this opportunity escape of thanking the following friends for their valuable and ready assistance:—Mr. J. Brownbill, for the use of his very able notes made during the preparation of the volume dealing with this portion of Lancashire in the “Victorian History of the Counties of England,” and for the extracts from the “de Banco” and “Assize Rolls”; the Registrar of Lichfield for the extracts from the Lichfield Registers; Mr. F. V. Driffeld for constant help and kindly criticism, and especially for the use of his notes on the stone escutcheons and monuments of the Church; Messrs. J. Paul Rylands and W. F. Irvine for placing at my disposal their transcript of all the inscriptions on the monuments; and Canon Mitchell for his encouragement and help extending over a period of two years.

The present work is an extended form of a paper I was privileged to read before the “Lancashire and Cheshire Historical Society,” and its publication now is largely due to the encouragement of the late Arthur Evans, Esqre., of Prescott, whose interest in the Church and all things pertaining thereto will long be gratefully remembered by all who were privileged to come into contact with him.

PRESCOT, *Easter*, 1908.

THE TOWNSHIP OF PRESCOT.

According to an old tradition Prescott was anciently an habitation of priests, and the name *Prestescote*, for such is the early spelling, certainly lends colour to this old belief, consisting as it does of the two words *preost* and *cote*, the latter of which still survives in the word *dovecote*.

The ecclesiastical origin of the town is further corroborated by the name *Churchley*, the name by which the place is designated in many early documents. The word *ley* or *leigh* bears the same significance as the Cumberland *thwaite*, and *Churchley* signifies the Church Clearing. In the Assize Rolls of the reign of Richard II. it is described as "Churchleigh, now called Prestecote," and the name lingered on for many years as may be seen from the following entry in the Court Rolls of the Manor for the year 1536:—

"Ordered that no tenant or tenants shall carry any dung or mucke on the Churchleigh fields after the 13th day of May on paine of 6s 8d for every time."

The name *Rudgate*, the gate of the Rood or Cross, in the adjoining Manor of Whiston may also be mentioned in this connection.¹

There can be no doubt that the importance of Prescott as a centre for the surrounding country was due to the foundation of a Church and the settlement of priests. St. Cyprian said, "Where the Bishop is, there is the Church," and it might be said with equal force of the early centuries of Christianity in England that "where

1.—Rudgate appears frequently in the Ogle Rolls. These Rolls, now in the possession of Henry Cross, Esq., of Prescott, consist of a Roll of ten skins made by John Ogle in the year 1602, being copies of original documents referring to the Manor of Whiston.

the Church was there was the trade." It was a centre, and round it houses began to cluster. The wants of the priests had to be supplied, their cattle tended, and their clearings cultivated. The Church was a convenient landmark, and soon became the natural centre for the transaction of business. Cattle were driven in here to be bartered, and farm produce offered for sale.

The Venerable Bede lays down the duties of a parish priest as follows:—"He is not to be a covetous trader, nor a plunderer, nor drunk often in winehouses, nor be proud or boastful, nor wear ostentatious girdles, nor be adorned with gold. He is to take care of the Churches and apply himself exclusively to their sacred duties: and not to indulge in idle speech or idle deeds, nor to let dogs come within the Church inclosure, *nor more swine or cattle than a man might govern,*" thus pointing to the fact that the Church inclosure was practically the market place for the neighbourhood. That it was so in Prescott may be seen from the Court Rolls of the Manor wherein the Church porch is referred to as the place where bargains were to be concluded.

In the year 1333 the Rector, William de Dacre, obtained a Charter for a "market and moveable fair in Prestecote to continue for three dayes commencing on the Wednesday next after the feast of Corpus Christi." That this charter was of great value to the township is evident from the fact that a few years later, in 1355 we find the Rector of Wigan petitioning for "leave to destroy the market at Prestecote which had proved of great injury to his own market at Wigan, the townships being only eight miles apart." To this the Rector of Prescott replied that he had found the market established and could not answer without the Bishop and Patron.¹

1.—Duchy of Lancaster Assize Rolls, 42, &.

Fortunately for the town the suit, which appears to have lasted some years, was unsuccessful, and another charter bestowing additional rights was granted in the reign of Henry VI.¹

The township however even in early times was not wholly dependent on agricultural interests. Tool-making appears to have flourished to no inconsiderable extent, and at the present day Prescott files are nowhere excelled for fineness of temper and perfection of workmanship.

The making of coarse red earthenware was also a large source of employment for the inhabitants, and at one time the making of conical sugar moulds assumed large proportions. This industry however was destroyed by the introduction of iron moulds to replace the clay ones which could only be used once. One pottery in "Snig Lane" did aim at higher things, but all it ever turned out was some fairly defective white ware. Sail-making existed to some extent also, and one factory in "Hillock Street" was well known along the banks of the Mersey.

As a posting centre Prescott also obtained considerable notoriety, the stage coaches from Liverpool passing through it on their way south and east, and a large number of inns sprang up with extensive stabling accommodation. In the year 1759 the Governors of the Grammar School, according to the ancient Minute Book, decided to erect a new school-house "Because the present school was dangerously situated because of its proximity to the public road and by reason of the narrowness of the road opposite and the many wheel carriages passing therein," from which entry it appears that the discovery of reckless driving was not left to the modern motorist.²

Among the many thousands of Huguenots who sought shelter in Great Britain after the Edict of Nantes (1598)

1.—Charter R. Henr. VI.

2.—The School at this time was situated in Church Street where the Post Office now stands.

was one Woolrich, a watchmaker by trade, who settled in Prescott and commenced there the making of watch movements. This industry was soon carried to great perfection, and it is the pride of Prescott that the first chronometer was made there. Some fifty years ago the making of movements was an extensive and lucrative business, but at the present day foreign competition has completely killed this branch of manufacture as far as Prescott is concerned, and the only flourishing manufacturing interest in the township to-day is the extensive factory of the British Insulated and Helsby Cables, Ltd.

The township of Prescott, as far at least as can be ascertained, has produced few notable men, but there is one at least of whom Prescott has a right to boast. John Philip Kemble was born in Hillock Street (now called Kemble Street), on February 1st, 1757, and was baptised a few days later in the parish Church although his parents were Roman Catholics. At the age of fifteen his father sent him to the college at Douai intending that he should take orders. Kemble however, soon found that he had no vocation for the priesthood and returned to England, joining the theatrical company of Crump and Chamberlain with whom he made his first appearance on the stage as Theodosius in 1776. It is said that the great tragedian had a strong fancy for comedy parts, and it was wittily remarked of him in this connection that "his smile resembled the plating on a coffin."

His greatest role was undoubtedly "Macbeth," and his enormous success in it was due in no slight measure to the magnificent acting of his sister, Mrs. Siddons. He died in Lausanne in 1823.

THE MANOR OF PRESCOT.

The Manor of Prescott separated from Whiston was attached to the Rectory of the Church and has descended with it, the Rectors being Lords of the Manor. In the year 1140 Roger Gernet held the fee of one knight by the office of Forester of Lancaster. This fee consisted of nine manors, and "Whiston with the Church of Prescott" is mentioned as one of the members.¹ The patronage, however, appears to have been conveyed in marriage with Joan, daughter and heiress of Benedict Gernet, to William de Dacre, first Baron Dacre of Gillesland, in the reign of Edward I.

The records of the Manorial Court have, unfortunately, been indifferently preserved. An ancient oak chest with five locks, which has always stood in the old Court-room, was opened in 1904 by the kind permission of the Lords of the Manor (the Provost and Fellows of King's College, Cambridge), and was found to contain the Court Rolls, and records of the Court.²

These records do not go back beyond the year 1595, and even then some are missing. Fortunately, however, there is in existence an abstract book of the proceedings of the Court, compiled in the year 1642.³ The first entry in this book is from the Court Roll of the year 1509, at which time Thomas, Earl of Derby, Lord Stanley, was Steward; Sir Richard Bold, of Bold, was one of the Fourmen; and William Leyland,

1.—Rec. Soc. Lanes. Inquests and Extents, Part I., pp. 43, 44, 188.

2.—An entry in the Court Roll for 1597 gives us the date of this chest. It was to be made with five locks, and a separate compartment for the Charter. This compartment is intact, but the Charter has been abstracted.

3.—This book has been in the keeping of the Treasurer of the Prescott Charities for many generations.

Esquire, Receiver-General to Lord Derby, was Deputy-Steward.

The usage and the custom of the Court was roughly as follows:—The Lord of the Manor appointed a Steward and a jury of twenty or more. The four most prominent men of this jury were known as the Four-men, who had charge of all the records, and in whose hands were vested the charities of the Manor. The Court thus constituted took cognisance of all offences against law and order, acted as a Licensing Bench, appointed Constables, Leather-Sealers, Ale-tasters, Burly-men, and other officials, but chiefly it had to do with Surrenders—the lands of the Manor being all copyhold lands, paying quit rents to the Lord of the Manor.

The first entry in this Abstract Book bears the date 1509, and runs as follows:—

“Ad cur cu visu franc pleg ville de Prescott tent ibm quart die April Anno R. Rs. Henr octavi primo cora Rico Bold Milit et Wills Leyland Armiger receptor genal comiss^s. Thomo Comi Derby dno Stanley. Sup inquisitione ibm Capt p scru Robti Waynwright et al inter alia ordinat est ad hanc cor qd nullus hom Maidus infra villa de Prescott nec recepit ludent ad illicit jocor viz ad talos & cards deinceps sub pena—xiid. toties quoties post hora nonen in nocte.”

The next entries are dated 1510 and 1514, and then a gap follows till the year 1531, then follows an entry in the year 1534, and from that time an abstract is given of the proceedings of the Court at every Session down to the year 1681.

A few extracts will give a fair idea of the various offences with which the Court dealt, and also illustrate the power it wielded for safeguarding the interests of the community.

"John Crookes presented to be a man inhabilis remaner infra villa p^rd. Ideo p^rcept est q^rd recedat a villa infra xv dies sub pena—6s 8d." 1534

"Ordered that none shall suffer men's prenties or servants to play at cards or dyce in their howses, and that after xi at night none shall suffer them to be in their howses sub pena for every prentice and every servant—xiid." 1535

"Ordered that none shall receive or lodge beggars." 1536

"That all p^rsons admitted to brewe and sell ale shall sell of the best a gallon for 2d and of the second a gallon for a 1d ob, and a quart of the best—ob during such time as they shall continue to sell ale."¹ 1542

"A payne of xxs upon he inhabitants of Prescott for making of a Cuckstoole before Michaelmas next." 1542

"Ordered that all tenants and inhabitants shall bringe their corne to be ground to the Lord's Milne and noe other milne if they may be sped in convenient tyme at the Lord's Milne." 1546

"Cicely Hitchmough who was formerly p^rsented to be a woman of evil cariage and to be expelled the towne, is referred to my Lord to be punished." 1554

"Ordered that none shall sell any victuals or other wares upon the Sunday from the beginninge of Mattins till the Heigh Masse be ended—sub pena xs." 1555

"The Jury say and p^rsent that Evan Garnet Glover and the late Relicte of Bryan Dyke every of them have kept and sold Bread & Ale and other Victuals in their houses from tyme to tyme since the last Court: and have not found & putt in safe pledges before the Steward for the observinge of good & honest order in their houses accordinge to the forme and p^rmission of the Statute, nor were permitted by the Steward 1562

1.—An "ob" means a halfpenny.

accordinge to the custome of Prescottt aforesaid. Ideo quisque eor in m sepat—xxd.”

1562 “That Humphrey Augsdale made an assalt upon Edward Stockley Cunstable & of him drewe blood. Therefore it was ordered hee should suffer three daies punishm^{nt} of his body in such manner as the Steward should appoint, wch if he refuse hee shall bee in m iis iiijd.”

1562 “That the Late Relicte of Thomas Lathom. the wife of Edward Glover, & the late relicte of James Harrington are common brawlers & scoulds and hurtful to theire neighbors. Ideo quilbt eor in m—xijd.”

1562 “Thurstan Canner pr^sented for takinge suit upon John Leadbetter in a forren court. Ideo in m vjs viiijd.”

1570 “The Jury pr^sents that whereas divrs younge men within the towne doe disorder themselves divers tymes with brawlinge fightinge & otherwise wch have noe money to pay theire Amerciam^{ts}. It is ordered that such pr^sons hereafter soe offendinge shall sitt in the stocks three days & three nights evy time & have nothing but bread & water & if any one release them to sitt in the stocks in their steeds.”

1579 “Ordered that Thomas Potter be elected Coroner.”

1581 “That Thomas Wards receaved into his howse one William Clerke without the consent of the fower men. Ideo in m iijs iiijd.”

1594 “It is ordered that the Cunstables shall not suffer Gilbert Pryce als Jackson a common drunkard and brawler to carry any sword or weapons within Prescottt.”

1621 “Ordered that Elizabeth Woosie shall remove those bastards out of the towne wch shee hath entertayned for a longe tyme past contrary to the former orders of the Cort. Otherwise that shee bee sett 4 severall

markett dayes in the stocks by the Cunstables for the space of viij howres together & afterwards to be whipped through the towne."

"Ralph Halsall p^rsented for saying the Towne was 1630
governed by fooles in m—iij^s iiij^d."

"Idem for sayinge hee would fall tymber in spyte of all the towne in m—iij^s iiij^d."

"A p^ticular of the Armes belonginge to the towne 1662
of Prescote:—

Three Musketts	} Now delivered by the old Cunstables to Richard Harper and Peter Garnett p ^r sente Cunstables."
Three Swords	
Three Blewcoats	
Three Bilts	
Three Girdles of Bandoliers	

"An order for the repaire of the Bearehouse." 1668

"Severall p^rsented for bringinge Corne to the Markett 1672
better in the top of the sack than in the bottom."

Among the other documents preserved in this chest already referred to, are two which are not without interest. The first is a licence to sell ale bearing the date 1651; and the second refers to the visitation of the town of Prescote with the plague. They are given below in full:—

"The condision of this obligation is such: that whereas Cicely Litherland is admitted and allowed of by the Steward of the Mannor to keepe a common Alehouse or Victualling howse wthin the said Towneshipp of Prescott to brewe & sell Ale & Beere in the howse where shee now liveth according to the lawes & statutes in that case made and provided. If therefore the said Cicely Litherland doe from henceforth keepe & mantayne good order in her howse & do not suffer to be used any unlawful games wthin her sd howse nor doe or shall lodge resett or keepe any vagabonds or

other suspicious disordered pson or psons in her sd howse during such tyme as shee shall sell Ale & Beere as afore^{sd}, that then this pnte or obligation to be void or else to remaine effectuell in the law."

The other, referring to the plague, runs as follows:—

"Forasmuch as it hath pleased God to visitt the Towne of Prescottt with the plague (as is sustained in the judgment & opinion of doctor Crouch and doctor Walton who have severally viewed some of the dead bodies) by reason whereof the towne has for the space of a weeke & upwards been shutt upp & the poore of the Towne by that means debarred & hindered of any manner of subsistence but what they could get in the Towne or what their charitable neighbors were pleased to bestowe upon them insomuch as if speedy means be not taken for their reliefe there may be danger of them starving or breakinge out into the country: whereupon wee the inhabitants of the saide Towne whose names are hereunto subscribed make bold to certify the number of the families & psons inhabiting who have not any meanes to subsist upon being now debarred of their liberty trade and traffic recommending the same to the due consideration of the worshipp^{ll} the justices of peace and Quor^m within this countie to take care & make provision for the said people. Witness our hands hereunto subscribed ye 18th day of Octr. 1652.

Edw. Greene. John Parr.

Henry Blundell. Thos. Lawrenson.

Edward Darbyshire. Henry Bolton Cur," &c., &c.

The town still retains its ancient privileges and rights, and the Court Leet and Court Baron is still held every year, when the Four Men and other officials are chosen, and all copyholders are called upon to answer to their names. The proceedings to-day, however, are entirely formal and the fines imposed for non-attendance are not enforced.

THE RECTORS AND VICARS OF PRESCOT.

As has been already noticed, the advowson of the Church of Prescott was originally one of the appurtenances of the Manor of Whiston, held by the Forester of Lancaster, and in the year 1140 the patronage was in the hands of Richard Gernet, Forester of Lancaster at that time. Joan, daughter and heiress of Benedict Gernet, married William de Dacre, First Baron Dacre of Gillesland, in the reign of Edward I., and through her the patronage passed into the Dacre family. About the year 1370, Sir John de Nevill, Lord of Raby, acquired the advowson from Ranulph de Dacre,¹ and then in the year 1391 Ralph de Nevill exchanged this for the advowsons of Stanidrop and Brancepeth, in the see of Durham, John of Gaunt, the Duke of Lancaster, becoming patron.² The patronage then descended with the Crown until conferred by Henry VI. on his new College of the Blessed Virgin Mary and St. Nicholas at Cambridge (King's College) in 1445.³

From that time the patronage has belonged to King's College, together with the Manor of Prescott. The Rectory was appropriated to the College in 1448, and a vicarage was ordained.

The list of Rectors and Vicars is a complete one from the year 1179, but it must not be thought that there were no Rectors before that time. As a matter of fact the foundation of the first church in Prescott must be

1.—Lich Registers, N.f87.

2.—Ibid vi.f57

3.—Pat. 23, Henry VI., par. 22.

put back to a much earlier date, as will be made clear in the Notes on Architecture and Monuments of the Church. (See Appendix.)

Ricardus
Circa
1170

Ricardus is the first rector of whom there is any trace. His name appears in the *Pipe-Rolls* of 24 Henr. II.¹, the occasion being the infliction of a fine "pro foresta"—that is, for some contravention of the forest laws. If the occasion of his appearance is not auspicious, it may at least be claimed for him that he is in good company, for Jordan, Dean of Manchester; Stephen, of the Church of Walton-on-the-Hill; Robert, Presbyter of Childwall; and Adam, Dean of Kirkham, were all fined at the same time for the same offence.

Benedict
Gernet
Circa
1190

The *de Banco Rolls* of the year 1190 show that at this time Benedict Gernet was Rector of Prescott, the patron having evidently exercised his right in favour of a kinsman.

Patrick
de
Prescote
Circa
1200

He was succeeded by Patrick de Prestecote, who appears as one of the witnesses to the foundation charter of Burscough Abbey,² and signs himself "Patrick de Prestecote, parson of the same." His name also appears in another charter dated 1208.³ He seems to have been related to the Gernets by marriage, and this will account for his presentation to the Rectory.

Richard
Circa
1240

Between Patrick de Prestecote and the next rector of whom there is any mention there is a distinct gap, but it is quite likely that Prescott was among the many vacant livings seized by the Pope after the visit of Cardinal Otho. Richard is first mentioned as rector in the year 1245.⁴ It is likely that he was a member of the Prestecote family, and he was Treasurer of Lichfield in 1190.⁵

1.—Pipe Rolls 24, Henr. II., Mich. 1177.

2.—Pipe Rolls 24, Henr. II.

3.—Ibid.

4.—Whalley Couchers. Chet. Soc. iii. 809.

5.—Le Neves Fasti i. 581.

In the year 1266 the right of presentation had evidently, by some lapse, fallen into the Bishop's hands, for in that year Master Alan le Breton was presented to the Rectory by the Bishop of Lichfield. At the time of presentation Alan was Rector of Coddington, and was allowed by special grant to hold Prescot also in consideration of the labours and perils he had undergone on behalf of the Bishop and his Church.¹ The perils referred to in his grant are most likely those Alan would incur in resisting the exactions of Edward I., who endeavoured to make the Church bear all the burden of the cost of his wars.

Alan le
Breton
1266

It was during Alan's tenure of the Rectory that the "Valor" of Pope Nicholas was made, in the year 1291, at which time the annual value was assessed at £40.

He was appointed Treasurer of Lichfield Cathedral in 1276, and retained that office until his death in 1306.² He resigned the rectory in 1303, in which year he called upon John le Norreys, of Lichfield, for an account of the time he had acted as his bailiff at Prescot.³ The Assize Rolls for the year 1300 contain the following entry relative to Prescot, which is not without interest:—"Emma de Linnebothes was taken in Prescot having a surplice and towel belonging to the Church; she was hanged. Her goods were worth 6d."⁴

Eustace de Cottesbech, or Cotesbache, is next mentioned as Rector in the year 1304,⁵ but he spent all his time in Scotland, where he was appointed Chamberlain and Receiver by Edward II. in September, 1307. He only held this office, however, for a very brief period, as he was dead in the following year, and

Eustache
de
Cottesbech
1303

1.—Lich. Regis. 1 f22.

2.—Le Neves Fasti I., 581.

3.—De Banco Rolls, 148.176d

4.—Assize Rolls, 417.37.

5.—De Banco Rolls, 152.180.

Robert Heron, Lieutenant of the Chamberlain of Scotland, is ordered to cause all the King's servants there to render account to the executors of the late Eustace de Cottesbech for the time they had held office under him. The same year complaint was made by the Burgesses of Perth that Sir Eustace de Godesbeche (*sic*), Chamberlain of Scotland, had disseised them of a rent belonging to their bridge of Tay and leased it to one William Romain, and that they had not been repaid the cost of a "pielle and fosse" which Sir John de Sandale, late Chamberlain, ordered them to make when "Robert de Brus" broke the peace.¹ There was a sequestration on his death in 1308, the Bishop granting the custody to William de Tatham and Roger de Shelton.²

William
de
Dacre
1309

From this time the entries in the Lichfield Registers regarding the Rectory of Prescot are complete, and it is there recorded that in the year 1309, on the 15th May, William de Dacre was presented to the Rectory by Sir William de Dacre and Joanna his wife, the patrons. He was clericus on appointment, and was ordained sub-deacon in the following Lent.³ Nine years later he received permission to be absent for a year's study.⁴ This was renewed in 1320.⁵ Two years later he resigned for some reason, and John Bone was presented to the Rectory by Henry de Munstall and Johanna de Dacre, his wife.⁶ Bone's tenure, however, was exceedingly brief, for in 1325 William de Dacre resumed the Rectory, he himself being the patron.

John
Bone
1323

William
de
Dacre
(resumed)

William was the eldest son and heir of Ranulph de Dacre by his wife Margaret, sole daughter and heiress

1.—Cal. of Docts. Relating to Scotland, vol. III., pp. 2.4.68.

2.—Lich. Regs. I. 56.

3.—Ibid I., 57.109.

4.—Ibid I. 85.

5.—2 Ibid I. 87.

6.—Ibid II. 99.

of Thomas de Multon, Baron of Gillesland. Ranulph de Dacre abducted his wife from Warwick Castle, a method of wooing which seems to have found favour with the Dacre family, for in 1487 the heiress of Grey-stoke, a girl of thirteen, was similarly carried off in the night from Brougham Castle by Sir Thomas de Dacre.

In the year 1345 William was appointed by the King, with nine others, to enquire into the disturbances at Carlisle, and the same year he was summoned to appear before the Council to answer for the loss of the Castle of Hermitage, in Scotland.¹ He died in 1346, in which year the executors of his will made complaint that "one John de Denton had broken open a certain chest at Prestecote and taken goods worth one hundred pounds; also that Philip de Penwortham had possessed himself of twenty of the late rector's pigs."²

William was succeeded by his kinsman Ranulph de Dacre, who was instituted on the 5th May, 1346.³ He was five months under the canonical age at the time, and in August, 1350, the Church was confirmed to him by Pope Clement VI.⁴ He became head of the Dacre family in 1361, and was summoned to Parliament as Lord Dacre.⁵ Having sold the advowson to Sir John de Neville, of Raby, in 1375, he retired to allow the new patron to exercise his right. He died intestate the same year.

Ranulph
de
Dacre
1346

The Dacres are commonly supposed to have derived their name from the exploits of one of their family who accompanied Richard Cœur de Lion in the Crusades, and who distinguished himself at the siege of Acre in

1.—Cal. Docts. Rel. Scot. III, p. 263.

2.—De Banco Rolls, 348, &c.

3.—Lich. Regs. II., fl19.

4.—Cal. Pap. Letters III., 397.

5.—G.E.C. Complete Peerage.

1191 when that town was re-taken with the loss of a hundred thousand men. The Dacre Arms, three *escallop* shells, and their badge—the palmer's staff and cord—would seem to support this tradition. The *escallop* shell is an old and popular charge as the emblem of St. James of Campostella, which led to its being the sign of a pilgrim. The lines of Sir Walter Raleigh will be remembered in this connection:—

Give me my scallop shell of quiet,
My staff of faith to lean upon.

The Dacres figure largely in Sir Walter Scott's *Lay of the Last Minstrel*, and he also connects the Dacres with the capture of Acre:—

Arrayed beneath the banner tall,
That streamed o'er Acre's conquered wall.
—(Canto iv., 17.)

The family of Dacre was a bold and valiant one. The wild slogan of this warlike house, "A Dacre! A Dacre! A rede bull! A rede bull!" was the call to victory on many a famous field. By the abduction of the heiress of Greystoke Sir Thomas, the descendant of the Rectors of Prescot, united the two great baronies of Greystoke and Gillesland, but the family was destined to end in co-heiresses. Lord Thomas Dacre left three daughters; the Duke of Norfolk when he married the widow had three sons. There was a family arrangement. The barony of Greystoke went with Lady Anne Dacre to the Earl of Arundel and Surrey, and the barony of Gillesland was the portion of Lady Elizabeth who married Lord William Howard, the duke's third son, the hero of Border Minstrels, whose descendant, the Earl of Carlisle now occupies the ancient seat of the Dacres at Naworth Castle.

John
Fairfax
1375

The new patron exercised his right in favour of John Fairfax who became Rector in 1375.¹ He was a younger

1.—Lich. Regs. iv. f87.

son of William Fairfax of Walton in Yorkshire. His will, dated at Prescot 7th June 1393, and passed a week later shows him to have been a man of considerable wealth. Among his bequests are the following:—

“X pounds to build a tower of stone for my Church at Prestecote” and his “Porteforium Magnum Notatum Usus Sarum (a great Breviary with musical notes) for Church use”; also “Twenty oxen and sixty sheep for my funeral dinner.” He desired to be buried in the Church of Walton where he founded a Chantry.¹

Just a year before the death of Fairfax the advowson had passed into the hands of John, Duke of Lancaster, and on the Rectory becoming vacant he appointed William de Ashton, or Assheton, L.L.D., who was instituted on the 25th June, 1393.² He held several other appointments, and it is probable that the presentation was made as a return for some service rendered. It is scarcely likely that he resided at Prescot. He was appointed Canon of Lincoln in 1388; was Dean of St. Martin-le-Grand in 1390. He was also Prebendary of Lichfield.³ It is not known whether the Rectory became vacant through his death or his preferment, but in 1403 it was again vacant, the right of presentation this time lying with the King, through whom the right descended with the Crown.

William
de
Ashton
1393

The choice fell upon Edmund Lacey and he was instituted on October 23rd, 1403.⁴ His appointments mark him as a man of deep learning and wide influence. He was Master of University College, Oxford, in 1398; Prebendary of Hereford and Lincoln; and Dean of the Chapel Royal under Henry V. He resigned the Rectory on being elevated to the See of Hereford in 1417, and

Edmund
Lacey
1403

1.—Surtees. Yorks. Wills iv., 186.

2.—Lich. Regs. vi., f57.

3.—Le Nevis Fasti II., 158, &c.

4.—Lich. Regs. vii., 91.

and was translated to Exeter in 1420 where he died in 1455.¹

Philip
Morgan
1417

The appointment of Philip Morgan J.U.D., his successor, bears the date April 1417, Henry V. being the patron.² He can scarcely have seen Prescott at all as he was constantly employed on foreign missions during his brief tenure of the Rectory. He appears to have been a man of considerable force of character, and was both vigilant and stern in putting down clerical abuses. He was Prebendary of Lincoln 1416, and resigned Prescott on his elevation to the See of Worcester in 1419, when he was also appointed Privy Counsellor. In 1423 he was elected Archbishop of York, but was translated by the Pope to Ely in 1426.³ It may be that he was too strenuous in his work of reformation to please the papal court.

Robert
Gilbert
1419

The Lichfield Registers contain no record of the institution of the next Rector—Robert Gilbert, and his name is only known by the entry recording the institution of his successor, where the cause of the vacancy is stated to be the elevation of Robert Gilbert to the See of London.

He was Warden of Merton College, Oxford, from 1417 to 1421: he held prebends in York and Lincoln: and was at different times Precentor at Salisbury, Archdeacon of Durham, Treasurer and Dean of York, and was finally elevated to the See of London in 1435, when "in consideration of his great virtue and knowledge and the services he had rendered to Henry V. and the reigning King" he was allowed to go to Rome in person to obtain confirmation of his election. He died in 1448.⁴

1.—Le Neves Fasti, Dict. Nat. Biog.

2.—Lich. Regs. viii., f19.

3.—Le Neves Fasti, Dict. Nat. Biog.

4.—Le Neves Fasti II., 296. &c.

Richard Praty S.T.P. was presented to the Rectory on the resignation of Gilbert, and was instituted on the 6th November 1436, being at that time Dean of the Chapel Royal and Chancellor of Salisbury. He only retained the benefice for some eighteen months, resigning on his appointment to the Bishopric of Chichester in 1438.¹

Richard
Praty
1436

Stephen Wilton was next appointed to Prescot, the date being 2nd August, 1438.² He was Prebendary of London and Lincoln, and Archdeacon successively of Middlesex, Salisbury and Cleveland. He resigned in 1441, and died in 1457.³

Stephen
Wilton
1438.

The last Rector of Prescot, William Boothe, assumed the Rectory on the presentation of the King in November 1441⁴, and was Canon of Salisbury at the time of his appointment. His mother was Joan, daughter of Sir Henry Trafford of Trafford K.C. His preferments, like those of his brothers were scandalously profuse. One brother, Lawrence, was Archbishop of York, and the other, John, was Bishop of Exeter. He was Prebendary of Lincoln Cathedral in 1420; Fellow of Manchester College in 1425; Canon of St. Paul's; Archdeacon of Middlesex; Chancellor of London and the University of Cambridge; Rector of Leigh and many other places. He resigned Prescot on his elevation to the Sec of Lichfield in 1447, and became Archbishop of York in 1452. He founded many Chantries, and died in 1464.⁵ During Boothe's tenure of the Rectory, in 1445, the patronage, as has already been noticed, was conferred by the King on his new college at Cambridge, now known as King's College. In 1447 the Rectory was appropriated to the College and a Vicarage ordained.

William
Boothe
1441.

1.—Ibid I., 246.

2.—Lich. Reg. ix., f123.

3.—Le Neves Fasti, iii., 147.

4.—Lich. Reg. ix., f125.

5.—Le Neves Fasti I., 553, &c. Hardy iii., 606.

On the first day of October 1448 the appropriation was ratified and confirmed by William Boothe, Bishop of Lichfield and Coventry, the late Rector, and the next day the endowment of the Vicarage was settled. By the appropriation a yearly pension of 13s. 4d. was reserved to the Bishop of the Diocese, and 6s. 8d. to the Archdeacon of Chester to be paid at Michaelmas, and 10s. yearly to be distributed among the poor of Prescott at the discretion of the Vicar, within one month after Lady Day.¹ The Vicar by the endowment was discharged from "all subsidies whatever to the Pope, ye King and the Bishop: but is to pay all procurations and synodals at the visitations of the Bishop and Archdeacon of Chester, and likewise the pensions reserved to them by the appropriation." He was also "to provide all Chaplains which ought to be provided within the Parish."

The College is made responsible for the repair of the Chancel of Prescott Church, and the Vicar for the repairs of the Chapel at Farnsworth "so far as the repairs of the same did before, if they did, belong to the Rector." The Vicar had for his endowment "the tithe of all Hay through the whole parish, of Mills, Wood and Underwood, Agistment of Cattle, Fisheries, Lambs, Wool, Cows, Oxen, Calves, Chickens, Pigs, Geese, Pidgeons, Bees, Swans, Hemp, Flax, Garlick, Onions, Herbs, Apples, and all sorts of fruits, and all other small tithes, with all oblations and personal tithes and mortuaries whatsoever."

1.—MSS. and Deeds preserved at Prescott.

2.—Ibid.

THE VICARS OF PRESCOT.

Ralph Duckworth D.D., was the first Vicar of Prescott appointed by King's College,¹ where he took his degree having proceeded there from Eton.² Apparently he was resident in the parish as frequent mention is made of him in the Lichfield Registers as having taken part in various enquiries in the neighbourhood. In 1453 he was associated with Archdeacon Stanley and others in an enquiry concerning various defaults at Burscough Priory; in 1457 he was doing similar work at Wigan in the matter of some frays in the churchyard there; and in 1459 he was enquiring into the condition of Walton Church.³ He died early in the year 1471, his tenure of the Vicarage having extended over nearly a quarter of a century.

Ralph
Duck-
worth
1448.

Ralph Duckworth was succeeded by Richard Lincoln S.T.B., whose appointment is dated 6th July 1471.⁴ He was admitted to King's College from Eton in 1449, and was a Fellow of his College.⁵

Richard
Lincolne
1471.

Robert Hacumblen D.D., was appointed Vicar by the College on the death of Lincoln, and his appointment bears the date 7th August 1492. He was educated at Eton and King's College, which he entered in 1462. He resigned Prescott on being elected Provost of his College on June 26th 1509, and retained that office until his death in 1528. He was buried in the College Chapel.⁶

Robert
Hacumblen
1492.

1.—The list of Vicars has been compiled from an ancient list of Mr. Gwyn's, at one time Vicar, and verified by references to the College Registers.

2.—Catalogus Etonæ.

3.—Lich. Regs. xi. f50.90, xii. f124.125.

4.—Ibid xii., f106.

5.—Catalogus Etonæ.

6.—Catalogus Etonæ. Prescott MSS. Cooper's Athenæ, Cantab.

Robert
Noke,
1509.

Robert Noke was presented to the Vicarage in 1509, but the exact date is not given. He was educated at Eton and entered King's College in 1500. He held Prebends in York and Southwell, and was also Rector of Warrington. He also held the appointment of Vice-Provost and Dean of Christ Church, Oxford, so that it is unlikely that he resided in the parish. The Court Rolls for the year 1514 show that there were two resident Chaplains:—Lawrence Lathom, and Johannes Sherdly, for they appeared before the Court to answer to their names as copyholders, and probably the working of the parish was left to them. Noke was a native of Berkshire, and was born at Bray in 1487. He died in 1529.¹

Simon
Matthew
1529.

The next Vicar, Simon Mathew B.D., whose appointment bears the date 14th December 1529, appears to have taken an active part in the Anglican reformation of Henry VIII.'s time, and some of his sermons have been printed. His desire for reformation seems to have been confined chiefly to doctrinal issues as he held several other benefices in plurality and was Prebendary of St. Paul's. He was born at Biggleswade in Bedfordshire, and was educated at Eton and King's College which he entered in 1513.² Like his predecessor he was non-resident, and in the Court Rolls of the Manor for the year 1536 "Sir John Webster, *Acting Vicar*," is ordered "to take down any wood that shadoweth the wind from the Milne." The Court Rolls for the year 1535 also mention a Chaplain "Sir Henry Colley" who is presented for "stopping the highway in Milne Lane."

By a proviso in the lease of the Rectory dated 1534, the Vicar was to have the whole tithe of Rainhill paying

1.—Piccope's MSS. Prescott MSS. Catalogus Etonæ, &c.

2.—Lich. Reg. xiii.-xiv., f65. Catalogus Etonæ. Cooper's Athenæ Cantab. Prescott MSS.

therefore four pounds yearly to the lessees of the Rectory.

In the General Ecclesiastical Survey of 25th Henry VIII. (1535) is the following entry:—"The Vicarage of Prescote aforesaid in the hands of Simon Mathew, Bachelor of Divinity, is valued in the rent of the Mansion House or Vicarage there by the year 5s. Oblations, privy tithes of hay, flax, wool, lambs, calves, with the Easter Roll, one year with another by estimation £25 4s. 5d., sum of the value £25 9s. 5d. Thereof in a pension paid to the Bishop of Chester by the year 13s. 4d. Likewise in money paid to the Archdeacon of Chester for senodals and procurations 15s. 4d. and there remains £24.00.09. Tenth thereof £02.08.01."

Robert Brassey who succeeded Mathew on 15th April 1541,¹ was born at Bunbury, Cheshire, and educated at Eton and King's College which he entered in 1525. He took his B.A. in 1530, and the degree of D.D. was conferred upon him in 1557.² The period of his tenure of the Vicarage was marked by drastic changes. The short reign of Edward VI. saw the substitution of the Communion Service for the Mass, the issue of the *Book of Homilies*, the revision of the Prayer Book, the reduction of the Forty-two Articles of Religion to Thirty-nine and the abolition of the surplice as popish. Despite the fact that Brassey apparently adhered to the ancient order, he managed to retain his benefice, and continued to hold it when Mary came to the throne. That this was no easy feat may be seen by a reference to the Clergy List of 1541 and comparing it with the Visitation List of 1554. The former shows that there

Robert
Brassey
1541.

1.—Lich Reg. xiii. to xiv., f38.

2.—Catalogus Etonæ. Gwyn's MSS., &c.

was a staff of ten Clergy at Prescott, including the Vicar:—

- “ Dns. Johes Webstare conduct’ p Vicariu ibm.
 „ Ricus Pottor conduct p Johem Eccleston.
 „ Edwardus Garnet vivit de stipite.
 „ Henricus Waynwright vivit de stipite.
 „ Homfridus Cartwright conduct p Johem Eccleston.
 „ Laurencius Robe apud Caplam de Raynford.
 „ Ricus Whitehead apud Farnworth.
 „ Petrus Lancaster vivit de stipite.
 „ Radus Ric’son ex terra’ p’ ficuo.”¹

A glance at the latter shows clearly the change made under Edward VI. The Clergy had been reduced to three; the Vicar and his Curate alone remained at Prescott, and the Curate at Farnworth.² His election as Provost of King’s College in 1556, shows conclusively that all his sympathies were, as has been said, with the ancient order, and if any other proof were needed it is to be found in the fact that he was present and assisted at the examination of George Marsh who was burned at West Chester “ for professing the Truth of the Gospel ” in the reign of Mary (April 24th, 1555).³ He died a week before Queen Mary, on the 10th November 1558, and was buried in his College Chapel.

It will have been noticed in the Clergy List of 1541, quoted above, that it is said of Garnet that “ vivit de stipite.” It has been suggested that this means:—“ He lives on alms,” but it is impossible to see how the words can bear that interpretation. It would seem clear that the words mean that he, and the others, lived on certain stocks or vested funds, bequests possibly for the foundation of chantries. There is an entry in the Court Rolls for the year 1546 which supports this contention.

1.—Lancs. and Ches. Rec. Soc., vol. 33.

2.—List at Chester Dioc. Reg.

3.—Foxes Acts and Mts., vii. 42.

and indeed the "stocks" referred to there may be the very "stocks" from which the clergy in the List who are spoken of as living "de stipite" may have got their remuneration. We give the entry in full:—

"Richd. Guy and Ellen his wyffe own a cottage and small garden for life of the grant of one Margaret Guy—yielding to the Church of Prescote yearly xii.d., v.—

"to the Rood Stock iv.d.

"to Our Ladie's Stock iv.d.

"to St. Katherine's Stock iv.d. for evermore."

The Commissioners appointed under the "New Chantry Act," reported that there were several Chantry priests at Prescot. The Act speaks of the Chantries as "heretical and hurtful," and proposed to put the money to "good and Godly uses," by endowing Grammar Schools and Colleges. Needless to say, very little of the money thus raised found its way into the coffers of either Grammar Schools or Colleges, and the best commentary on the Act is the fact that it was passed while prosecutions were still being carried on against persons for not believing in purgatory!

William Whitlock, D.D., was presented to the Vicarage, vacant by the death of Robert Brassey, on the 20th December, 1558. He was educated at Eton and King's College, and entered the latter in 1537, and was B.A. in 1542.¹ He was an adherent of the new system in religion, and was a man of some literary and antiquarian taste, publishing several books on the history of Lichfield,² where he held a Prebend.³

William
Whitlock
1558.

The second year of his tenure of the Vicarage saw the issue of the papal brief forbidding attendance at the English service, and two years later an Act was passed inflicting a fine on all who withdrew from the services

1.—*Catalogus Etonæ*.

2.—Cooper's *Athenæ Cantab*, Dict. Nat. Biog.

3.—*Le Neves Fasti*, I., 594.

of the Church. The next year, in 1563, the Test Act was passed by which an oath of allegiance to the Queen and abjuration of the temporal authority of the Pope was exacted from all holders of office, lay or spiritual, with the exception of the Peers. The effect of this stringency on the part of Parliament was that very little improvement was made in the number of the working Clergy. In 1562 the Visitation List shows that there were only the Vicar and three assistants at Prescot, and a curate at Farnworth, but two years after the passing of the Test Act things were worse than ever as only the Curate appeared.¹

Thomas
Mead
1583.

The next Vicar Thomas Mead M.A., was presented to the living on the 26th December 1583. He was educated at Eton and King's College, entering the latter in 1570.² He was Chaplain to Henry Stanley, Earl of Derby, and afterwards to Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex, and Earl Marshall of England. There was a visitation during Mead's incumbency in 1592, and it was alleged that the Vicar and the Curate did not catechise the youth. Mead appeared and stated that "every Sunday and holy day he did interpret upon some parcel of Scripture both before and after noon." This did not satisfy the commissioners and he was ordered to catechise also. At the same time the churchwardens were instructed to provide "a decent Communion table" before Christmas, and also "a fair linen cloth" for it: and they were to use perambulations and make presentment of all offenders. The offences they were to enquire into are specified as follows:—Adultery, marriage without banns, playing cards on the Sabbath Day, absence from the Church services, and having children baptised by some missionary priest.³

1.—List at Chester Diog. Reg..

2.—King's College Ledgers. Catalogus Etonæ. MSS. in the Earl of Derby's Library.

3.—Trans. Hist. Soc. N.S. X., 189

Mead died in 1616, and his will which was proved at Chester the same year shows that he was a man of considerable means. It speaks of property in Hertford, and a house at Ware. Evidently he did not trouble himself much about the collection of his tithes, and complaint is made in his will that the parishioners were behind "in tithes and oblations due for some twenty years together, some twenty, some ten, and some five years." He desired, however, that all who paid their arrears due for the last two years preceding his death, within six months of his decease, should be discharged from all further liability.

John Aldem B.D., was presented to the Vicarage on the 5th December 1616. He entered King's College in 1592 having been previously educated at Eton. He was a Justice of the Peace for Lancashire, and Vice-Provost of his College.¹

John
Aldem,
1616.

The Churchwardens Accounts have been preserved from the year 1638, and consequently from this time on it is possible to get a closer insight into the general working of the parish. The accounts themselves will be treated of in another chapter. Considerable difficulty seems to have been experienced in dealing with the recusants as the following entries show:—
April 1639 "Spent in meeting the Churchwardens and Cunstables and divers others of the parish to make Inquisition of all recusants goods within the parish 00.05.00." "Spent in going to Chester to return the *Quor. Nom.* and to bring forth an excommunication 00.06.00" and in the year 1641 there are frequent entries with regard to the presentment of all recusants and "loyterers," and as to the infliction of fines for absence from Church, the amount being "xii.d. a piece for each absence from Church."

1.—Catalogus Etonæ.

For the most part the days of Aldem were days of comparative quiet, and of steady, consistent improvement in the method of conducting the services. A more seemly order was being gradually introduced, but his last years were marked by a series of rapid changes. Commissions were appointed by the Long Parliament in January 1641 for the removal of "tables placed altar-wise and other reliques of idolatry." The result was a resolution in the House of Commons dated September 1st 1641:—"That the Churchwardens of every parish Church and Chapel respectively do forthwith remove the Communion table from the east end of the Church, Chapel or Chancel into some other convenient place: and that they take away the rails, and level the Chancels as heretofore they were before the late innovations." This order was immediately complied with at Prescott as the following entry shows:—

Nov. 1641. "Spent by the accomptants in comminge to take up the rayles and remove the Communion table accordinge to the order of the House of Commons . . . 00.02.00." This order marked the commencement of a period of carelessness and neglect in regard to all matters concerning the Church and its services, a period which reached its head in the time of the next Vicar.

Aldem died in 1642, and his will was proved at Chester the same year.

Richard
Day
1642.

On the 21st of February 1642 Richard Day, M.A., was presented to the Vicarage. He was admitted to King's College, from Eton, in 1622. He was a native of Bray, in Berkshire.¹ Mr. Day got into trouble with the Parliament owing to his refusal "by reason of his conscience" to take the solemn League and Covenant.

The Churchwardens Accounts show that he was absent in 1642 and 1643, one Petrus Jackson, curate,

1.—Catalogus Etonæ. College Regs.

acting in his name. Having failed to appear before the committee appointed to enquire into his case he was ejected in 1646 and the living sequestered "to the use of some Godlie and orthodox Divine, until the said Mr. Day shall have appeared before this committee and given them satisfaction concerning the pmisses and answered the matters charged agst him, and John Lathom, Wm. Barnes, and Wm. Glover are appointed to provide for the services of the cure of the said Church and collect and gather the tithes, rentes, revenues and profits of the said Rectorie for the space of three months next ensuing." In 1647 Mr. Day appeared and said that the reason he had deserted his cure was that it was not safe to live in Prescott "in regard of the wars and of the King's forces then frequent in those parts."¹ The excuse does not seem to have been without some foundation for two entries in the Churchwardens Accounts refer to disbursements made for cleaning out the Church "after the soldiers had lyen in it." The churchwardens also "crave respite or allowance of xi.s. iii.d. being arrears which they had collected in Sutton and was forcibly taken from one of them by Captain John Bewsicke his troops." At any rate he managed to satisfy the commissioners, and was reinstated in 1647, married and resided at Prescott for the rest of his days.

The changes made during Mr. Day's tenure are shown in the wardens' accounts. The surplice was sold as old linen, the organ broken up and disposed of in pieces, and the old cross in the churchyard destroyed. The only constructive policy pursued was the purchase of a cushion for the pulpit, the declamations of the "Godlie and orthodox divine" who served the cure during the Vicar's absence having evidently, been too much for the old cushion to stand! But the neglect is perhaps best

1.—Brit. Mus. Add. MSS., 15669 f212, 15670 f175, 199, 15671 f96. Bod. MSS. 324, p. 37, 119, &c.

illustrated by the fact that it was necessary for the Court of the Manor to make the following order:—"An order against laying dunge near the Church wall nor in the way to the Vicaridge nor in the Churchyarde nor suffering swyne to depasture in the Churchyarde sub pena vi.s. viii.d. for evie offence."

Mr. Day died in 1649 and his will was proved at Chester a year later. He desired to be buried in the Parish Church of Prescott, and ordered that £100 be paid out of the sale of his books.

At this point in the succession the College Ledger Books show some confusion. There is an entry dated May 2nd 1650, to the effect that John Withens was at that time presented to the Vicarage of Prescott but the entry is erased, and in the margin are the words—"Vacat horâ Quæsta." Then follows an entry stating that on June 25th 1650, Edward Larking was presented to Prescott on the death of R. Day. The Parliamentary Survey of this year speaks of Larking as "elected Vicar but not yet come down," and records the fact that Prescott was supplied by Mr. Wasthead, schoolmaster, on his behalf, receiving therefore fifteen shillings for every Sunday he officiated. Edward Larking was born at Limpsfield in Surrey and was educated at Eton and King's College, being admitted to the latter in 1639.¹ He became B.A. in September 1642, and the same year was admitted to his fellowship which he held until midsummer 1653 when he was presented to the Rectory of Dunton. In 1655 he became Rector of Limesfield in Surrey and was succeeded at Dunton by Jonathan Holroyd.² In *John Hall's Catalogue*³ he is spoken of as "a very troublesome man in this College in the year 1650," and it is more than likely that his presentation

Edward
Larking
1650.

1.—*Catalogus Etonæ.*

2.—MSS. Cat. Provost and Scholars of King's College.

3.—At King's College.

to Prescott was a scheme to get rid of him. In the Calendar of State Papers—Domestic Series—1660-61¹ is the following:—"1660 July. Edward Larking petitions for a mandate to the Provost &c. of Eton to elect him to the next vacant fellowship. His father, John Larking, lost his Prebend at Rochester for his loyalty, and was driven out of Kent for sending his two sons to serve his Majesty, one of whom was slain." Annexed is (i.) a certificate by the Earl of Dorset and others to the loyalty and orthodoxy of Edward Larking, Minister of Limesfield, Surrey. (ii.) Certificate by John Gainsford and others that he read the common prayers at Titsey, Surrey, with all the collects and prayers for the King and the royal progeny to his utmost hazard and peril. (iii.) Certificate of Leonard Graham and others that he was a zealous promoter of the rising in Surrey in favour of the Restoration.

John Withens succeeded Mr. Larking on August 22nd 1650. He was educated at Eton and King's College the latter of which he entered in 1639,² and where he held the position of Logic Reader for some years. Hall's Catalogue states that he married Mr. Day's widow, and that he died at Prescott in 1666. The Wardens' Accounts for the years of his incumbency show that a gradual improvement was being effected as regards the services of the Church. The surplice was again introduced and a "faire linen clothe" once more placed upon the Communion table and handsome silver was procured for the service, and the rails once more set round the table now moved again to the east end of the Church.

John
Withens
1650.

Abraham Ball M.A., was presented to the Vicarage on the 29th June 1667. He was a native of Plymouth, and like all his predecessors was educated at Eton and

Abraham
Ball
1667.

1.—P. 165.

2.—Catalogus Etonæ, &c.

King's College, entering the latter in 1650.¹ He resided in Prescot, and busied himself with putting the Church into a proper state of repair. He died at Prescot in 1676, and his will was proved at Chester the same year. He desired that his body should be buried in the Church, and bequeathed the residue of his estate after certain legacies had been paid, to the "school wardens of the Free School of Prescot to remain as a stock for ever and the interest to be paid to the schoolmaster."

Edward
Goodall
1677.

The next Vicar, Edward Goodall, M.A., who was presented to the living on 24th July 1677 might have been the original of the *Vicar of Bray*. Born at Horton, Bucks, he was educated at Eton and King's College the date of his entry at the latter being 1661.² He was received into Communion with the Roman Church in the reign of James II., but quickly changed his views when that monarch was driven from the throne, and returned to the fold of the Church of England. His timeserving however stood him in little stead as he was forced to resign on the complaint of his parishioners, by the Bishop of Chester. The feelings with which the news of his resignation was received in the parish is tersely described by the following entry in the Wardens' accounts for the year 1690:—

"Paid the ringers for ringing the bells the day that news came from the Bishop that the Vicar had resigned and was quite outed . . . 2s. 6d."

John
Legge
1690.

John Legge, M.A., succeeded Mr. Goodall, the date of his presentation being 18th July, 1690. He was born at St. Colomb, in Cornwall, and was admitted to King's College from Eton in 1683.³ His tenure of the Vicarage

1.—Catalogus Etonæ, &c.
2.—Catalogus Etonæ, &c.
3.—Catalogus Etonæ, &c.

was a very brief one, as he died at Prescott in December, 1691.⁴

Thomas Bryan, M.A., was next presented to the Vicarage, the date being 18th March, 1692. He was a native of London, and was educated at Eton and King's College, the date of his admission to the latter being 1677.² He resided only during the first two years of his incumbency,³ and the cure was served by Christopher Marsden, afterwards Curate-in-Charge at Farnworth.⁴ Mr. Marsden was paid out of the small tithes by order of the Vicar, and himself paid the two curates who served under him.

Thomas
Bryan
1692.

Mr. Bryan was succeeded by Francis Bere, M.A., his presentation bearing the date 8th May, 1700. He was born at Ickenham, Middlesex, and educated at Eton and King's College, entering the latter in 1684.⁵ Mr. Bere had a long dispute with the parishioners on the Farnworth side of the parish, who claimed that the right of presentation to their chapel rested with themselves, while Mr. Bere claimed that the Vicars had from time immemorial exercised that right. The matter was finally referred to the Bishop of Chester, who decided in favour of the Vicar of Prescott. Bishop Gastrell in 1719 returns the value of the Vicarage at £140 a year. There were then 735 families, and 372 papists and "other evil-disposed persons."

Francis
Bere
1700.

Mr. Bere died in 1722, and his will was proved at Chester the same year.

Benjamin Clarke was presented to the Vicarage, vacant by the death of Francis Bere, on 28th July,

Benjamin
Clarke
1722.

1.—Churchwardens' a/cs.—"15th December, 1691. Item. Spent at a meeting of the parish when we writt to the Colledge to give them notice of the late Vicar's death.....1s. 6d."

2.—Catalogus Etonæ.

3.—Churchwardens' a/cs.

4.—MSS. relating to disputes between Prescott and Farnsworth.

5.—Catalogus Etonæ.

1722. He was admitted to King's College from Eton in 1696, and was M.A. in 1704, and was afterwards Senior Fellow of his College.¹ He resided at Prescot and built the Vicarage house which now stands there. He died in 1730 and was buried in the Church.

Augustin
Gwyn
1730.

Augustin Gwyn, M.A., was presented on the death of Mr. Clarke, the date of the presentation being 18th September, 1730. He was a native of New Brentford, Middlesex, and was educated at Eton and King's College, entering the latter in 1715. He was M.A. in 1723, and was a Fellow of his College.² He married Mary Piper, a butcher's daughter of New Brentford, by whom he had issue:—

Augustin, born 17th December, 1732, died in Jamaica without issue; and William, born May 16th, 1735, elected Principal of Brasenose College, Oxford, in 1770, and died the same year.

Mr. Gwyn appears to have been very lax as regards the collection of his tithes, and never claimed the tithe on potatoes to which he had a right, and which would have amounted to quite a considerable sum. The year before his death he only received £70 from the tithes of the township of Parr, and it is significant that a tenant offered him £94 for these tithes and saw his way clear to make something out of them.³ The following is an account of the tithes, &c., received by Mr. Gwyn in 1775, taken from a MSS. written by Mr. Sewell, his successor:—⁴

1.—Catalogus Etonæ.

2.—Ibid.

3.—Sewell MSS., in the possession of Messrs. Henry Cross & Sons, of Prescot.

4.—Ibid.

Rainhill—great tithes	...	...	£70	0	0
Parr	„	„	70	0	0
3 Townships—small „	...	...	9	0	0
Sutton	„	„	14	14	0
10 Other Townships—small tithes			60	0	0
Preseptions	...	...	7	0	7
Surplice Fees	...	...	12	0	0
Glebe	...	...	15	0	0
			<hr/> £257 14 7 <hr/>		

His necessary outgoings are given as follows:—

Synodals, &c., to the Bishop	...	£1	16	0
Curate	...	40	0	0
King's College	...	6	0	0
Yearly tenths	...	2	8	0
Curate of Rainford	...	5	0	0
		<hr/> £55 4 0 <hr/>		

Mr. Gwyn was in receipt of the great tithes of Rainhill and Parr by an arrangement made by the College with his predecessor, Mr. Clarke.¹ He died in 1776 and was buried in the Church.

Samuel Sewell, M.A., a native of New Windsor, Berks, was presented to the living on the 11th July, 1776. He was admitted to King's College from Eton in 1754; was M.A. in 1762, and was afterwards Senior Fellow.² He resided in Prescott until his death in 1815. He was a man of considerable means, and left numerous charitable bequests.³

Samuel
Sewell
1776.

Charles George Thomas Driffield, M.A., was presented on the death of Mr. Sewell, the date of his presentation being the 4th July, 1815. He was born at East Bergholt, Suffolk, in 1771, and entered Eton

C. G. T.
Driffield
1815.

1.—Sewell MSS.

2.—Catalogus Etonæ, &c.

3.—See chapter on *Architecture and Monuments*.

in 1783, and King's College in 1790. He was B.A. in 1795; M.A. 1798; Curate of Tolleshunt D'Arcy 1794-1815; Beckingham (Tolleshunt Major) 1795-1808; Layer Marney 1808-1813; Vicar of Little Maplestead, one of the five round churches in England, 1799, which benefice he continued to hold, as well as Prescott, until his death on the 10th December, 1847. During his incumbency he made a vigorous attempt to reorganise the collection of the tithes, many of which had been allowed to lapse.

Charles
Chapman
1848.

Charles Chapman, M.A., was next presented to the living on 4th February, 1848. He was educated at Eton and King's College. He committed suicide immediately after the presentation was made, and never came into residence.

Lewis
William
Sampson
1849.

Lewis William Sampson, M.A., was presented to the Vicarage in 1849. He was educated at Eton and King's College, and was a Fellow of his College. He lived mostly in London, and only resided in Prescott when forced to do so by the Bishop. His curate lived at the Vicarage. He died in 1882.

Henry
Alexander
Mac-
naghten
1882.

Henry Alexander Macnaghten, M.A., was presented to the living in 1882. He was educated at Eton and entered King's College in 1869, and was M.A. in 1875. He was Vicar of Wentworth 1877-1882. He resigned Prescott in 1886 on being appointed Rector of Tankersley, in Yorkshire.

Harry Mitchell, M.A., the first Vicar of Prescott who was not educated at Eton and King's College, was instituted on the 2nd February, 1887. He was admitted to Emmanuel College, Cambridge, from Uppingham (of which he is now one of the governors) in 1866; was B.A. 1870; M.A. 1886. He was Vicar of Peak Forest 1875-1881; St. John's, Pemberton, 1881-1886; Rural Dean of Prescott 1890; Canon of Liverpool 1893.

THE CHURCH WARDENS' ACCOUNTS.

The Church wardens' accounts are complete and excellently preserved from the year 1637. Two fragments of the accounts of earlier days have been pasted in at the end of the second volume, the oldest of which is as follows:—

“The parse is indetted to James Watmough as apereth by boke—v^{li} iijs v^d qr.”

“The account taken of James Watmough Roger Cowley Rauff Loughton and Evan Pyke Church wardens of saide allowed & included by theyght¹ men whose names be underwritten for ij. yeares paste yt is to say M^oD^o liij & liiij.

Edward Parre x.

Richard Denton †.

Jo. Tarbocke x.

— Wygan x. (*sic*)

Henry Cowley x.

John A. . . †

Henry Greene †

Rauff Lennard x.”

There were four Church wardens elected at the Parish Church, two for Prescot, and two to represent the various chapelries and townships in the parish. The “Eight Men” were elected annually by all the parishioners, and had the power of levying the “Church leyes” or rates which were used for the upkeep of the Church, the relief of the poor, and various other objects.

The collection of these “leyes” was attended with some difficulty, as appears by the following entries:—

“4^o die April 1638. Henry Ogle Esquire in arreare (for Prescote) for all the 22 Church leyes att 3s. 4d. a leye . . . 3.13.4.”

1.—The eight.

“xvi. April 1639. Theis accomptants likewise chargeth themselves with the receipt of £v iiid. from Mr. James Pembarton of Whistoun for 71 leyes in arreare and unpaid by him in several yeares past being 8½d. att a leye and of the some of 50s. for charges and costs of suit brought against him for the same as by an order thereof made dat. xviii.^o die August last past.”

The process of enforcing payment was evidently an expensive one:—

“1639. xvi.^o April. Given to a messenger
for cariage of a letter to Chester about
suite commenced against Mr. Ogle ... 4d.”

“Spent by one of these accomptants in going
to Chester to p’secute suite agst Mr. Ogle
and staying there three daies ... 5s. 6d.”

“Which accomptant craveth allowance for his
horse travell the same tyme ... 3s.”

“Paid to Mr. Lawrence for his paines in
comminge to Prescote and taking the
deposicions of certain witnesses p’duced on
the behalf of the parish agst Mr. Ogle. 3. 14s. 0d.”

“Spent by one of these accomptants in going
to Chester and stayinge there three daies
out to p’cure Mr. Chanceallor to come to
Prescote about the difference betwixt the
parish and Mr. Ogle ... 6s. 0d.”

“Paid to Thomas Wailes for extraordinary
charges when the Chanceallor and his
attendants were at Prescote and many of
the parishioners p’duced for witnesses 15. 2s. 0d.”

“Spent at Ffarnworth upon the Chanceallor
and his attendants when these
accomptants went to meete him on the
way coming betwixt Chester and Prescote 6s. 0d.”

" Given to the ringers at ffarnworth for
ringing as he came through the towne
and to the ringers of Prescote for ringing
when he was come to Prescote ... 5s. 6d."

" Paid to Mr. Chanceallr for his paines in
comminge to Prescote ... 6. 0s. 0d."

Many and various were the uses to which the money
raised by the levying of these Church leyes was put, and
the following extracts have been taken from the accounts
with a view to illustrating the methods by which this
money was disposed of:—

" Pd to John Taylor for blowinge the bellows 1638.
of the organ ... 6d."

" Given to a poore soldier which was pressed 1638.
forth out of Prescote ... 6d."

" Imprimis given to a passinger that had great 1638.
loss by fire and robbary ... 1s. 0d."

" Pd to the heigh Cunstable towards the 1639.
relieff of the prisoners at his Ma'ties'
Goale of Lancaster... 1. 6s. 0d."

" April. Spent in meetinge the Church 1639.
wardens and Cunstables and divers others
of the parish to make Inquisicion of all
recusants' goods within the parish ... 5s. 0d."

" Pd for Oyle for the Clocke and Bells and for 1639.
Candles to ring Curffey by ... 4s. 0d."

" Pd to Peter Kenricke as Sexton ... 2. 5s. 0d." 1640.

" Pd to Mr. Ettenhead for a tree towards the 1640.
makeinge of the new styles for the
Churchyarde ... 2. 4s. 0d."

1641. "Pd for 11 yards and a halfe of holland
cloathe to be a surplesse att 5s. 6d. the
yard abatinge 3d. at all and for threade
to make the same withall xii.d. In the
whole as appeareth by Ralph Hall
acquittance ... 3. 4s. 0d."
1663. "Pd to Henry Houghton for three fox-heads 3s. 0d."
1679. "Pd for the Act of Parliament for burying in
woolen ... 3s. 6d."
1681. "Spent in going to the 1st Quarter Sessions
to present recusants ... 6s. 0d.
Att the second for the like ... 8s. 0d.
Att the third for the like ... 9s. 0d."
1681. "Spent in meeting the Vicar four severall
times at the Quakers' meeting house
being commanded by warrant ... 9s. 0d."
1688. "Item given to an old minister ... 6d."
1688. "Pd to James Travis for writing a book of
the names of such who gave money for
the relief of the french protestants ... 1s. 0d."
1689. "Paid to Saml Boardman for hire of a great
pan and several things of others to boil
the Clocke in ... 4s. 6d."
1689. "Spent in going to Bold to get a Warrant
to Collect 12d. a Sunday of the recusants 3s. 0d."
1690. "Given to Capt. Jo. Wharton who had an
order to collect money for the rebuilding
of a ship ... ? "

About this period there are very numerous entries referring to donations to "poor parsons," "old parsons," "ministers' wives," and "ministers' children."

1691. "Spent by Mr. Marsden in entertaining the
Bishop ... 6. 0s. 0d."

“ April 28th. Whereas the expenses of the Church 1696.
wardens in going to visitations and at the times of their
meetings to bargain with any workman to do the Church
work and also on Sacrament daies and sundry other
particulars have heretofore been very great, for the
evansion of the like for the future it is this day at a
public meeting of the Eight Men and other parishioners
of the parish aforesaid in the Parish Church there (due
notice having been thereof given as well in ffarnworth
as Prescote side of the same parish) ordered and agreed
that the allowance for the Church wardens’ expenses
for the time to come shall not exceed the particulars
following.

Every Church warden’s expenses ^a going to	}	2s. 6d.
any visitation		
Besides the Curate’s charge if he go ...	}	

ffor every Warden that shall come to the	}	1s. 3d.
Communion on any Sacrament day for		
bearing the charges that day		

And if any poor persons of the parish who	}	6d.
live two miles from the Church shall		
come and receive the Sacrament and are		
not able to pay for their dinners then		
the Church wardens shall allow to every		
such poor person on such day to bear		
their charges then	}	

But to such persons as are of ability (tho	}	0d.
they come from the remotest part of the		
parish) nothing shall be allowed to or		
spent on them at the parish charge ...		

for every time the Church wardens shall
 have occasion to treat with workmen to
 get any work to be done at the Church
 they shall have two of the Eight Men
 present at the least and the Church
 wardens as many of them as shall then
 be present shall not be allowed to spend
 on the workmen and others then present
 above every warden one shilling ... } 1s. 0d.

And for the Church wardens charge in seeing
 the work be carefully done and likewise
 for the allowance to be spent on the
 workmen while the work is doing to be
 allowed of and appointed by two of the
 Eight Men at the least. }

And for expenses at any parish meeting upon
 what occasion or season soever shall not
 be allowed above } 6s. 0d.

And if any neighbouring or strange parson
 shall preach any time at Prescote and
 shall bring a friend or two with him
 then the Church wardens for the time
 being shall pay and defray the parson's
 charges and such his friends and the
 Church wardens' own only for such day. }

1710. "Pd for a bottle of wine to treat a strange
 parson with who came to preach on
 that day 2s. 0d."

"Paid for six warrants against the quakers... 12s. 0d."

"Spent in collecting a breefe for the
 Palatines 6s. 0d."

1724. "It is this day ordered and agreed that for the future
 the Church wardens shall not give any monies to any
 person whatever or passerger at the parish charges."

1725. "Pd to John Lawrenson for going round the
 towne to warn the barbers not to swear
 or shave on Sundays 6d."

THE PARISH OF PRESCOT.

The Parish of Prescott comprised originally the following fifteen townships:—

Bold.	Parr.	Great Sankey.
Cronton.	Penketh.	Sutton.
Cuerdley.	Prescot.	Whiston.
Ditton.	Rainford.	Widnes-with-Appleton.
Eccleston.	Rainhill.	Windle-with-Hardshaw.

The area of the parish so constituted was considerable, being in all about fifty-eight square miles. At the present time the township of Prescott alone remains to the parish, the other townships having been gradually absorbed in new parishes.

The Parliamentary Survey of 1650 mentions five Chapels besides the Mother Church in the parish, "St. Ellen's Chapel, Farnworth Chapel, Rainford Chapel and Sonkey's Chapel, and also an old ruined building called Windleshaw Chapel." The oldest of these is the Chapel at Farnworth, the foundation of which is of great antiquity. In the year 1291 we find the parishioners on the Farnworth side of the parish refusing to pay Church leys for the upkeep of the Mother Church at Prescott on the ground that they had their own Chapel at Farnworth to keep in repair.¹ The present Church, dedicated to St. Wilfred, was built in the reign of Henry VIII. The registers commence in 1538.

1.—Decree dated 15th January, 1619, and signed by John Bishop of Chester, in the Chester Registry. In it reference is made to a decree dated 1555, and the decree of 1291 is quoted in full. This latter is signed by Richard Buddeswall, Archdeacon of Chester, who decides against the contention of the Farnworth parishioners, and orders that they must "contribute without contradiction under pain of excommunication," this decision being upheld by both the decree of 1555 and that of 1619. (See Appendix.)

St. Ellen's Chapel (St. Helens) was founded by Sir Thomas Gerard of Ince about the year 1540 "to celebrate for the sowles of his ancestors," and in the Survey of 1548 it is returned as a Chantry Chapel. No chapelry was attached to it, and its duties were confined within its own walls, although the Sacrament of Baptism was administered there and marriages solemnised. This anomaly led to an assize trial in Liverpool in August 1847 respecting the right of the incumbent to the dues of the Chapel which were claimed, according to usage, by the Vicar of Prescott.¹ The Vicar of Prescott originally appointed a Curate-in-charge, but the living was so poor and unimportant that the right of presentation was allowed to lapse and passed into the hands of a few of the landed proprietors in the district. The registers do not commence until the year 1721.

The Chapel at Rainford existed in the year 1577, and was supplied by one of the clergy of the Mother Church. It fell into the hands of the Presbyterians and at the time of the Parliamentary Survey of 1650 a certain Timothy Smith officiated there. He is described as "an orthodox Godly preaching minister." The registers commence in 1718.

Sankey had no Chapel until about 1650, for the Parliamentary Survey of that year speaks of it as having lately been built. It fell into the hands of the Presbyterians and was used by them until 1728 when the Atherton family placed it under Episcopal government. It was rebuilt in 1767 and consecrated by Bishop Keene two years later. The registers commence in 1769.

The other parishes and Churches are all modern and call for no special notice.

1.—Not. Cest. 206.

PRESCOT GRAMMAR SCHOOL.

Of the foundation of the Grammar School there is no record, but mention is made of it as early as the reign of Edward VI. The first endowments came from a grant made in that reign of certain stocks and sums of money which had formerly been given for chantry priests, obits, and suchlike in the Parish of Prescott and seized into the King's hands after the dissolution of the Religious Houses. From an old School book it appears that it was supported by "voluntary gifts, mulcts, fines, rents reserved upon houses built on the wastes of the Manors of Prescott and Whiston, and by the interest of monies called stocks." The benefit of the School was extended to the Prescott side of the parish only, viz., to the townships of Prescott, Whiston, Rainhill, Sutton, Rainford, Eccleston, Windle and Parr.

The Farnworth side of the parish was excluded, probably because Farnworth had its own School founded in the reign of Henry VII.

The several funds and charities belonging to the School were in the hands of four trustees, or school-wardens as they were called, who were also responsible for the management of the School. These wardens were elected annually on St. Luke's Day by the parishioners at a vestry specially convened by public notice for that purpose, and the retiring wardens accounted for their proceedings to the parishioners and handed over to their successors any balances they might have in hand. The Vicar of the parish does not appear to have had anything to do with the management of the School *ex officio*, as frequent mention is made of his being appointed one

of the school-wardens in conjunction with other three persons.*

This arrangement seems to have been maintained without intermission up to the year 1748, and in all the books relating to the School up to this period it is referred to as the "Free Grammar School of Prescott." After that date for some years considerable confusion seems to have existed in matters relating to the management of the School, and it appears to have arisen in the following manner. The school-wardens found the buildings quite unsuitable. They decided that the School was "dangerously situated by reason of the narrowness of the street opposite thereto, and the many wheel carriages passing therein," and that it was "far too small." The south side of Hackley Moss was fixed upon as being a suitable site and application was made to the Lord of the Manor of Eccleston, Basil Thomas Eccleston, for a grant of some four hundred superficial yards. This was immediately granted, the only condition being that the wardens should pay a yearly rent of "twopence to the Lord of the Manor in consideration of the School being built on Hackley Moss." This school-house was built by voluntary subscriptions in the year 1759, and the names of seventy persons residing in different parts of the parish are mentioned. The money thus raised amounted to the sum of £94 13s. 5d. This was found insufficient to complete the building and £60 was advanced by the trustees of other properties in consideration "that they should have the nomination of three boys to be educated at the School." At the same time certain of the old "School stocks" were realised and the money invested

* Long extracts from the ancient school register are given by John Chorley, Overseer of the Charities of Prescott, at the Court Leet and Court Baron of the Manor held on the 30th May, 1755. The Court Roll for this year is preserved in the chest at the Town Hall.

in property the proceeds of which was to be applied to the teaching of poor children in Prescott.* This property was not vested solely in the hands of the school-wardens, and consequently other persons came to have a finger in the pie.

Evidently the old proverb about "too many cooks" was found to be true, for the subject of the distribution of these charities came into debate at a meeting of the Court Leet and Court Baron of the Manor in the year 1778. This meeting arbitrarily decided that in future the officers of the Manor should be joined with the school-wardens as managers of the School affairs. The result of this change was entirely unsatisfactory and in 1836 a memorial was addressed to the Commissioners of Education asking for their interference on the following grounds:—

First.—That the interference of the officials of the Manor in the management of the School was entirely illegal, no opportunity having been given to the parishioners at large to express their opinions on the matter, and that from time immemorial the school-wardens alone were responsible for the whole conduct of the School.

Second.—That the benefits of the School had been arbitrarily restricted to the township of Prescott to the entire exclusion of the other seven townships on the Prescott side of the parish to which the benefits of the School had always formerly extended.

Third.—That the Vicar of the parish had excluded the children of all dissenters and Roman Catholics.

* This property consisted of an estate in Cumber Lane called Siddalls, and an estate in Upton called Linacres. Another charity called "Marrows" is also mentioned, the proceeds of which were to be used for the purpose of binding apprentices. The Trustees had authority, however, to apply all these funds "for such other uses and purposes as they shall judge most fit for the relief, benefit, and support of the poor of the township of Prescott.

Fourth.—That the master of the School was imbecile and totally unable to attend to his duties, and that the assistant put in his place was an unfit person to have charge of the boys.

Fifth.—That no register was kept of the scholars, and that fifty boys were too many for one man to teach especially as he had to take twenty private pupils at the same time in order to eke out the miserable pittance given him by the headmaster.

Fortunately these complaints were poured into sympathetic ears, and since that time the School has prospered and been of great benefit to the town.

PRESCOT CHURCH.

The date of the foundation of the first Church at Prescott is unknown. A decree dated 1291 (see Appendix) states that "there is so great ruins and deformities and delapidations in the roofs, ornaments, walls and windows that unless speedy remedy be taken the said Church is in a short time likely to fall down to the ground," making it clear that the foundation was an old one at that time. The present Church is the fourth which has occupied this site since the eleventh century. As it now stands it consists of a Nave, 96ft. by 26ft. ; North and South Aisles 96ft. by 22ft. ; Chancel 50ft. by 25ft. ; Clergy Vestry 18ft. by 10ft. ; Choir Vestry 13ft. 6in. by 13ft. 6in. ; organ chamber 16ft. by 10ft. ; and a tower measuring externally 25ft by 25ft. and 75ft. high, surmounted by a spire of the same height.

The tower and spire were built in the year 1729. The height from the floor to the coping of the balustrade of the tower is seventy-five feet. At the height of 48 feet from the ground is a string course, and above this, showing on each of the four elevations of the tower, are Doric pilasters supporting a typical Doric entablature. Above the entablature is a balustrade surmounted at each corner by three vase-like ornaments peculiar to the Renaissance period. The spire, which is octagonal in plan, rises to the height of seventy-five feet above the lead-flat of the tower. It is divided in its height into four divisions by bold mouldings, and is pierced by twelve sound holes.

There is no record extant to give any clue as to the architect of this rather peculiar piece of architecture, but it is not at all unlike some of the work of Nicholas

Hawksmore, the only pupil of Sir Christopher Wren who attained any great distinction in his profession.

The Nave, which belongs to the Late perpendicular period, is flanked on each side by octagonal pillars from which spring "dropped" pointed arches, the soffits of which are boldly champered. Above these arches, at the height of thirty feet from the ground, are the clerestory windows, nine on each side. These windows are each divided into three lights by two stone mullions. The roof is a splendid open one of black oak supported by eleven roof trusses, alternately hammer and collar beams. The pendants from the hammer beams and the brackets under the collar beams are finely carved, and one of them is inscribed as follows:—THOMAS BOLD, KNIGHT 1610; and on the reverse side LADIBRIGHT BOLD: HIS: WYFFE. The end of the hammer beam opposite is carved with the Ogle Arms impaled.

The spaces between the common rafters are plastered, and this helps greatly to heighten the effect of the roof, which is one of the finest in Lancashire.

The north and south aisles were rebuilt and widened in 1819, and replace the narrow ones which formed part of the Church rebuilt in 1610. The elevation of the aisles is in the perpendicular style, with battlemented parapet; there are five windows in each aisle with equilateral pointed arches and divided into three lights by two stone mullions. The doorway in the North Elevation is exceedingly mean-looking, as are indeed all the doorways of the Church.

The Chancel was largely rebuilt about the beginning of last century, at the time the aisles in the nave were enlarged. All this work appears to have been done locally and no architect employed, everything being left to the local builder. Among other details the stone facing on the outside of the walls, for *facing* is all that it is,

has been set the wrong way and is all peeling off, and several of the windows are not true, to say nothing of the fact that they are totally out of keeping with the rest of the Church. The east window fortunately escaped the ruthless hand of the rebuilder, and remains as it was finished in 1610.

The Clergy Vestry is by far the oldest part of the Church as it now stands. The real floor of this Vestry is flagged with stone, and is two feet lower than the Chancel floor. For some unknown reason a false wooden floor has been put in about four feet above the level of the old one, which has effectually spoilt the proportions of this building. The roof also has been so much altered by numerous rebuildings and repairs that no trace of its original design remains. From the general design of this Vestry it would appear probable that it was originally a Chantry Chapel. The commission appointed by Henry VIII. to enquire into the chantries found several at Prescot, the oldest of which was one founded by Sir John Bold, of Bold, Knight, about the year 1410, and it is to this period that the building undoubtedly belongs. The Clergy Vestry is situated on the North side of the Chancel. The Choir Vestry, situated on the South side, is quite modern.

Reference to the old plans and to some old paintings shows that the Church built at the beginning of the seventeenth century was an excellent specimen of the work of the Late Perpendicular period. The aisles were much narrower than the present ones, and their elevations were broken by four deep buttresses which were directly in line with the pillars in the Nave. On each of the elevations between the buttresses were four square-headed, mullioned windows. Above these were

cornice and battlements, the cornice being broken in its length by griffins, and the corner battlements ornamented with elaborately carved pinnacles. To the doorways on both sides were roomy porches with semi-circular headed doorway openings. The aisles were covered by lean-to roofs, the apex of which came just below the clerestory windows.

An etching in the possession of Mr. F. V. Driffield, of Prescott, shows that there was a very fine Chancel Screen in the Church about sixty years ago, the base of which still remains. Four massive black oak uprights rose from this base to a height of about nineteen feet above the Chancel floor. In the two end divisions formed by these uprights were six circular pillars with beautifully moulded plinths and caps supporting a moulded lintel of black oak.

The choir stalls are also richly carved in the same material, and bear the date 1636. There are eleven misereres—five on the north side and six on the south, the carving on which has been destroyed and replaced by plain blocks of oak. One of these, on the north side, was evidently the seat of the Steward of the Manor, and it is inscribed I. PEMBERTON. MP in incised letters. These stalls remain a splendid tribute of the influence of Archbishop Land in the beautifying of the parish Churches in the land.

The reredos is a work of peculiar beauty and taste. It is executed in dark oak from the designs of Mr. C. E. Kemp, the carving being the work of Mr. Gilbert, R.A. There is the following inscription on a small brass plate affixed to it:—In Memory of William Lees Evans, Elizabeth Glaister his Wife dedicated this reredos. A.D. Mdcclxxi.

The organ case is the work of Sir Gilbert Scott.

The altar rails are evidently much older than the choir stalls, so that it is evident that when they were removed by the order of the House of Commons they were taken care of and replaced at the first opportunity. Like the choir stalls they are carved in fine black oak. Just outside the vestry door is a fine alms-box of the same material, richly carved. The carving is exceedingly bold in design, and may be dated about the fifteenth century. Next to this alms-box, against the north wall of the chancel is the figure of a man standing in seventeenth century civilian dress, arms above with helm and mantlet, much defaced but have been Ogle and Bertram quarterly. Crest defaced. The letters I.O. above the arms, and below VERITAS VINCIT.

Probably John Ogle of Whiston who was buried at Prescot, 12th September, 1612. He married Elizabeth, daughter of Thomas Standish of Duxbury. The Ogles of Whiston were a branch of the Northumberland family. One of his sons, Captain Henry Ogle, distinguished himself at the defence of Lathom House in 1645.

From various records¹ it would appear that at one time there was some old stained glass in the Church windows, but this has all disappeared and the glass is modern. The east window was given by Miss Chorley and is the work of D. Evans, Shrewsbury, and dated 1845. The subject is the Four Evangelists. The inscription, if any, is invisible.

On the east wall of the south aisle is a window of three lights designed by Sir Edward Burne-Jones. The subject is the Ascension. It is a window which is

1.—The Arms of Nevill of Raby are mentioned. "Some Notes on the Arms in Prescote Church circa, 1590" (Trans. Hist. Soc. Lancs. & Ches., vol. 33).

variously criticised, but it is safe to say that it could hardly be classed amongst his best work. The inscription on it is as follows:—"To the Glory of God and in Memory of Elizabeth Lockwood of the Knoll died October 20th 1878 aged 78."

On the easternmost side of the south wall of the same aisle is a similar window the subject of which is the Nativity. It bears the following inscription:—"To the Glory of God in Memory of the Reverend Joseph Saville Roberts Evans, M.A., and of Elizabeth his Wife, erected by their surviving children in the year 1901 A.D."

Just to the west of this window is another the subject of which is the Parable of the Ten Talents. Underneath are the words:—"Erected - by - public - subscription - to - the - Memory - of - William - Lees - Evans - J - P - of - Prescot - who - died - Oct - 23 - 1887." Mr. Evans was churchwarden for many years and prominent in every good work. There is also a small window of one light erected to his memory in the clergy vestry, the subject of which is St. Stephen. In the same wall is another window to the memory of Lewis William Sampson, once Vicar of the parish.

In the north-west corner stands a handsome Italian marble font of peculiar design. Immediately under the lip, running round it is the following:—"THE GIFT OF DANIEL WILLIS OF HALSNEAD HALL ESQRE 1755."

The Communion plate of the Church is exceedingly handsome and consists of two plain chalices with baluster stem. One carries the Dublin hall mark, a harp crowned and one other undecipherable, with the bowl inscribed "John Wallis, Robert Morse, Henry Gaskin, Churchwardens." The other bears the London hall mark of 1662. The maker's mark is almost obliterated

but appears to be R.W. It is inscribed as follows:—
 “The Communion Cupp of Prescot. Roger Case, Henry Webster, Brian Ley, Edmund Fellam, Churchwardens. Anno Domini 1663.”

A plain Credence paten with the London hall mark of 1723, and maker's mark P. surmounted by a crown for Benjamin Pyne. It bears the names of “John Shaw, John Mercer, John Rigby, Henry Gaskell, Churchwardens,” and is dated 1723.

Two patens with shaped edges resting on three feet, both bearing the hall mark of 1738, and the maker's mark R.A. for Robert Abercromby. On them both are the churchwardens' names:—“John Chorley, John Rigby, Thomas Edwards, Richard Greenough,” and the date 1738.

A pair of large handsome flagons, tankard-shape, with spreading bases, dome lids and whistle handles. They are interesting because made in Cork. They bear two marks, viz.: the maker's B.B. in a shield, and the word “Sterling.” The maker may have been Benjamin Burton who was warden of the Dublin Company of Goldsmiths in the years 1695 and 1696.¹

In the year 1552 the Church goods of Prescot are returned as follows:—“Fawre bellis twoo chalices and i gilte pixe one vestment ii tynacles silke of diverse colors iiii vestments thereof i is of tawny chamblette and of silke w^t birds and another of whit buscean ii coapes i of velvet and another of silke ii crosses of brass ii candlestikhs.”²

The Commissioners appointed by Edward VI. received (7th Ed. VI.) from Prescot Church “Two Chalices

1.—I am indebted to Mr. J. T. Evans for these notes on the plate.

2.—Chet. Soc. Church Goods, II. 80.

weighing 29 oz. iii. carats whereof one gilt weighing 13 oz. iii. carats and the other with the furnishing of a little box weighing xvi. oz.”¹

There was a peal of bells at Prescott in 1638 for in that year they were taken down and recast at very considerable expense as is shown in the Church-wardens' Accounts for that year. The present peal of bells was cast by Messrs. Mears of London in 1845, at which time the old bells were presented to a neighbouring parish Church.

The parish registers commence in the year 1573, but are badly preserved generally until the year 1665.

The various monuments in the Church are as follows:—

On the North wall of the Chancel a monument of coloured marble, arms in Chippendale frame, Sable a chevron Ermine between 3 crescents Argent, impaling Gules 3 hawks close Argent. Crest gone.

Hic juxtà conduntur Exuviae.

THOMÆ BARRON de PRESCOT Ari.

Uxorem duxit FRANCISCAM, e filiabus.

IOANNIS ATHERTON de PRESTON Generosi.

Pulvere paterno miscentur etiam Cineres.

Mariæ infantis, Prolis unicæ.

Ipse, per annos quinque Sponsæ superstes,

Obiit vicesimo nono Die Aprilis A.D. IDCCLI.

Ætatis suæ LIII.

Gratitudinis ergò verè debitæ.

Patroni Memoræ bene-merentis.

IOANNES ATHERTON de PRESTON Armiger.

P:

Semel est calcanda via Lethi.

1.—Lane. Chuntries, p. 282.

Mr. Thomas Barron erected Prescot House in 1733, which has since been demolished, and the site built over. At his death in 1751, having no surviving children, he left this and other property to his godson John Atherton, known as Squire Atherton, who was brother to William Atherton, mentioned below, and to Henry Atherton, barrister, of London. The property came eventually to Lucy, wife of Richard Willis, and her sister Eleanora Atherton, the daughters of Henry Atherton. On the death of Miss Atherton the property went to a relative on her mother's side and was sold.

On the South wall of the Chancel is a marble tablet on red granite:—

In Memory of
The Revd. JOSEPH SAVILLE ROBERTS EVANS, M.A.,
Queen's College, Oxford,
formerly of Stayley
in the parish of Ashton under Lyne,
but long resident in this town.
For many years an active magistrate in
this and the adjoining counties of
York and Chester.
He died at Hastings, 28th October 1861,
aged 60 years,
and was buried at Hollington.

[Text.]

Also of Elizabeth Evans, widow of the above
who died at Dorking, April 3rd 1897 aged 91 years.
and was buried at Hollington.

The Revd. J. S. R. Evans married Elizabeth, third daughter of William Lees, Esq^{re}, of the Lathoms, Whiston, in 1830, and was the great grandson of the Revd. William Evans, Rector of Llanfairfechan and Vicar of Bangor.

On the same wall is a white marble monument with an Urn above, on a black marble slab;—

TO the Memory of

SOPHIA

One of the Co-heiresses of IOHN CATER

late of Kempstone in the County of Bedford Esqr. and
Wife of CHAS. ROBT. SHERBOURNE Esqr. of Ravenhead
whose amiable gentleness of disposition &c. &c.

She died on the 21st day of Novr. 1812

In the 51st year of her age.

Erected by her truly disconsolate husband.

A little to the West is a large white marble monument, the work of the celebrated R. Westmacott, Jun. The subject of this fine piece of work is an angel comforting a sorrowing widow. It is inscribed:—

HIC JACET

GULIELMUS ATHERTON, ARMIGER.

QUI JUVENIS ADHUC IN INSULAM JAMAICAM PROPECTUS,

et annos illic plusquam viginti commoratus.

Rem familiarem

solertissima terrarum cultura, integerrimâ probitate,

et (quod nunc illi pluris est) mitissimo semper in servos ingenio,

auxit feliciter votisque suis exæquavit,

in patriam reversus,

intermissa nunquam in uxorem indulgentia, et in amicos fidelitate
artiumque ingenuarum

(picturæ præ ceteris, tabularumque optimarum.)

felici studio et non vulgari scientia, gratissimæ suorum

memoriæ commendatus,

obiit Jun. 22. A.D. 1803 ÆTAT. 61.

Monumentum hoc carissimo suo et desideratissimo marito

ELIZABETHA vidua moerens posuit.

R. WESTMACOTT, JUNR., LONDONI. SCULPTR.

On the North of the Chancel, near the Vestry door, is a marble tablet in a Gothic stone frame, erected in memory of:—

THE REVEREND
CHARLES GEORGE THOMAS DRIFFIELD
THIRTY-TWO YEARS VICAR OF PRESCOT
DEPARTED THIS LIFE DECEMBER 10TH 1847
AGED 76

THE REVD. VERO GURDON DRIFFIELD
HIS FOURTH SON
DIED DECEMBER 14TH 1845 AGED 25

[TEXT]

LETITIA DRIFFIELD
WIDOW OF
THE ABOVE REVD. C. G. T. DRIFFIELD
DIED IN LONDON FEB. 18TH 1872
AGED 80.

Mr. Driffield was descended from a branch of the family that settled at Escrick, near York, in 1637. His father and grandfather were both beneficed clergymen in East Anglia. His mother was Mary, the daughter of the Hon. and Revd. Edward Townshend, Dean of Norwich, and grand-daughter of Charles, 2nd Viscount Townshend, and closely connected with the families of Walpole and Wodehouse. Letitia Driffield was the youngest daughter of Vero Kemball, of Woodham Mortimer, Essex, and Letitia Philippa, daughter of the Revd. Parker Gurdon, of Assington, Suffolk.

On white marble tablet on east wall of nave between chancel and window. Crest a demi-lion rampant holding a sceptre terminating in 3 points:—

Sacred to the Memory
 of Henry Rowson late of Prescott
 who died at Rochdale
 on his return from Harrogate
 on the 28th day of May 1825
 in the 63d year of his age.
 Also of Martha Wife of the said Henry Rowson
 who died on the 22d day of January 1826
 in the 63d year of her age.
 Also of Elizabeth Rowson their Daughter
 who died on the 31st day of October 1800
 Aged 11 years.
 And of John Rowson their Son
 who died on the 23d day of April 1822
 Aged 29 Years.
 This Tablet is erected in affectionate
 remembrance of their Memories by William
 second son of the above named
 Henry and Martha Rowson.

Henry Rowson, Solicitor of Prescott, succeeded to the business of John and Robert Hodgkinson, mentioned later. He was Steward of the Manor of Prescott and Clerk to the Justices.

Below this is a painting of the Royal Arms, Geo. III., in a wooden frame.

SOUTH AISLE.

On south wall of nave between second and third windows from the east end on small white marble tablet, modern:—

THE BYRON DOLE.

£100 BEQUEATHED BY ELLEN BYRON,
DAUGHTER OF JAMES BYRON, MARKET PLACE,
PRESCOT, THE INTEREST TO BE LAID OUT IN
CLOTHING, AND DISTRIBUTED YEARLY, ON THE
9TH OCTOBER, AMONGST SUCH FIVE OLD
SINGLE WOMEN, NATIVES OF PRESCOT, AS
THE VICAR FOR THE TIME BEING SHOULD
CONSIDER MOST DESERVING.

On south wall of nave between south door and extreme westerly window, on wall, a white marble tablet:—

SACRED TO
THE MEMORY OF
JAMES FRASER ESQUIRE,
OF CULDUTHEL IN NORTH BRITAIN,
AND RAVENHEAD, IN LANCASHIRE; LATE
LIEUT. COL. OF THE CAITHNESS FENCIBLES,
AND COL. COMMANDANT OF THE ST. HELENS
REGIMENT OF LOCAL MILITIA; WHO FOR MANY
YEARS FAITHFULLY DISCHARGED THE DUTIES OF
A MAGISTRATE AND DEPUTY LIEUTENANT FOR THIS
COUNTY. TO HIS OWN HONOUR AND THE ADVANTAGE OF
SOCIETY. HE DIED ON THE 23RD OF JANUARY, 1816, IN THE
61ST YEAR OF HIS AGE.

Coat of arms below inscription, painted quarterly,
1st and 4th Azure, 3 cinquefoils, Arg., 2nd and 3rd Arg.
(sic.) 3 crest coronets, Or. On escutcheon of pretence,
Az. on a chevron between 3 boars' head erased Arg. a

stag's head erased between two hands issuant from the side of the escutcheon grasping a dagger, all Or. Motto on a ribbon—

JE SUIS PREST.

On south nave between door and westerly window under the other Fraser Monument:—

SACRED TO THE MEMORY
OF MILLICENT,
WIDOW OF JAMES FRASER, ESQUIRE,
OF CULDUTHELL, NORTH BRITAIN.
ONLY DAUGHTER AND HEIRESS OF
JOHN MACKAY, ESQUIRE.
OF RAVENHEAD HOUSE, IN THIS COUNTY,
WHO DIED AT LEAMINGTON, IN THE
COUNTY OF WARWICK, ON THE 28TH OF
JANUARY 1846, AGED 85, AND WAS BURIED
IN THE FAMILY VAULT IN THIS CHURCH.

West wall in south-west corner:—

A brass ornamental cross with the figure of a man in 15th century civilian dress and gown, and two shields of arms, enamelled and sunk into a coarse marble slab.

On the cross in Gothic letters are Latin texts, and on the shaft is—

In memoria Georgii Case qui obiit
11^o die Novembri (sic)
Anno Dni. Mdcccxxxvi.
Etiam uxoris svæ Mariæ
quæ obiit xvi^o die Januarii A.D. Mdcccxxxv.

The two
shields of
the arms
are at the
sides.

Arms—Quarterly 1st and 4th. Argent three bars Vert. over all a lion rampant Gules [] 2nd and 3rd Argent on a chevron Gules between three birds close Sable, as many crosses pattie Or [] On a circle around the shield Nec timide nec temere. Arms Gules two bars and in chief three mullets Argent [] on a shield within a lozenge with a gothic M above.

Mr. George Case was born on the 9th December, 1747, and baptised at Prescot on the 13th December the same year. He was the son of John Case of Prescott Mercer and Alice his wife, and was Mayor of Liverpool in 1781, and a Justice of the Peace for the County of Lancaster in 1782. He died at his residence, Walton Priory, on the 2nd November, 1836, in his 89th year, having been pre-deceased by his wife, Mary, who died on the 16th January, 1835, aged 75 years. His son, John Deane Case was for many years treasurer to the Liverpool Corporation. The first quartered arms are apparently those of Case, of Barwick, and the second those of Deane, being the same as those used by Mr. Deane who was Lord Mayor of London in 1628. How Mr. Case was connected with these two families is not known.

On the west wall of the nave, on the south side of the door, on a marble slab:—

In a Sepulchre near this Place are deposited
the remains of DANIEL WILLIS off HALSNEAD HALL Esqr.
Youngest Son of MARTIN WILLIS Esqr. by ELLEN his wife;
One of the Daughters and Coheirs of WILLIAM DANIEL
late of WIGGAN Esqr. who died the first of November 1763 in the
75th Year of his Age. Also the remains of ANNE WILLIS his wife,
who died the 22d July 1766 in the 77th Year of her Age.

Mr. Daniel Willis, who in conjunction with his wife did a great deal to beautify the Church and further its usefulness, was the head of an old family which settled in Lancashire in the time of Charles II., having previously been resident in Berkshire. His grandfather, Mr. Thomas Willis, purchased Halsnead in 1684, a property which had for hundreds of years previously been in the hands of the Pemberton family.

Daniel Willis was the grandson of Thomas Willis, who married Elizabeth, daughter of Edward Martin, of Drogheda. Their son Martin, who married Ellen, daughter of Col. William D'Anyers or Daniells, was his father. His wife, Anne, was the daughter of William ffarington, Esq^r., of Shaw Hall, Lancashire.

A full account of this family is to be found in *Burke's Landed Gentry*, and also in vol. xlii. of the *Trans. Hist. Soc. Lanes. and Ches.*, 1892.

On a white marble tablet on the west wall. north side of the door:—

In respectful and affectionate
Remembrance
of the many Virtues,
and excellent Qualities
of
MARY HUGHES,
Wife of MICHAEL HUGHES, Esquire
of Sutton Lodge,
and Daughter of the late
Rev^d. WILLIAM JOHNSON, of this Town,
This Stone is placed;
An Emblem
of the Simplicity of her Manners,
and the Purity of her Mind.
She died May 10th, 1798,
Aged 46 Years.

Michael Hughes was the grandfather of Michael James Hughes, of Sherdley, Co. Lanc.

On the same wall, a white marble tablet:—

Near this Place in the middle Aisle are Interred
the Remains of John, Son of Thos. & Cath^e. Edwards,
of Eccleston. Obiit 6th Oct^r. 1743.

Ætatis 9 Years

Thomas Edwards Obiit 30th Janry. 1762

Ætatis 70 Years

Catherine Edwards Obiit 7th Novr. 1769

Ætatis 75 Years

William Travers late of Prescot

Obiit 4th July 1782 Ætatis 44 Years

Margaret Travers late of Warrington

Obiit 1st Sep^r. 1787 Ætatis 54 Years

James Travers late of Warrington

Obiit 23d May 1789 Ætatis 48 Years

Elizabeth Travers Obiit 7th August 1790

Ætatis 35 Years

The Parish Registers of 1745 describe Mr. Thomas Edwards of Eccleston as a glassmaker, but a few years later as a gentleman. He died in 1762 and Katherine his widow in 1769. William Travers is described as
“Gent: of Prescot.”

On the north wall to the west of the north door. on
a white and coloured marble tablet:—

Near this Place lies the remains of JOHN CHORLEY
Who departed hence the 11th Janry. 1774
in the 69th Year of a Life spent in
PRIVATE BENEFICENCE, GENERAL BENEVOLENCE
PUBLICK UTILITY
In each Relation, every step he trod.
The honest Man the noblest Work of God.

To west of above, on white marble tablet:—

SACRED
TO THE MEMORY OF
JOHN CHORLEY
WHO
IN EVERY DEPARTMENT OF LIFE
CONSCIENTIOUSLY ENDEAVOURED TO DO HIS DUTY
HE DIED
THE 2ND OF OCTOBER 1823
IN THE 58TH YEAR OF HIS AGE
IN AFFECTIONATE RESPECT TO HIS MEMORY
THIS TABLET IS ERECTED
BY HIS WIDOW.

The Chorleys of Prescott were a branch of the family of the Chorleys of Chorley, a full account of whom is to be found in the last edition of Baine's History of Lancashire. The head of the Chorleys of Chorley became implicated in the Rebellion of 1715, and was tried for, and convicted of High Treason at Liverpool. Sentence of execution was passed, but he died in prison before it was carried into effect.

On the east wall of the north aisle a white marble tablet with urn and mantling mounted on black marble:—

IN
the Vault
adjoining this Tablet
lie the remains of
JOHN HODGKINSON Esq^r. Solicitor,
of Prescott who died Sept^r. 27th 1793.
Aged 63 Years.

Also the remains of ROBERT HODGKINSON
Esq^r. Solicitor, of Prescott, Son of the above
JOHN HODGKINSON. He died Novr. 29th, 1797.
Aged 40 Years.

Also the remains of MARY HODGKINSON
Spinster, daughter of the above
JOHN HODGKINSON. She died Sept^r. 30th, 1809
Aged 34 Years.

Also the remains of JANE, Widow of the Reverend
JOHN BARNES Vicar of Huyton, and daughter of the
above JOHN HODGKINSON. She died Nov^r. 21st.
1836

Aged 73 Years.

[TEXT.]

In another vault near to this Tablet
lie the remains of Jane RATLIFFE BARROW
Wife of DAVID BARROW of Prescott,
(a Daughter of the said JOHN and JANE BARNES),
she died 2ND December 1849,
Aged 63 Years.

C. B. ROBINSON, SC., LIVERPOOL.

At east end of north wall of the north aisle a white marble tablet on black marble:—

NEAR THIS LIES INTERRED
THE REMAINS OF THE
REVD. SAMUEL SEWELL, M.A.,
FOR 39 YEARS VICAR OF THIS PARISH.
WHO DEPARTED THIS LIFE
ON THE 9TH DAY OF FEB., 1815.
AGED 77 YEARS.
HAVING LEFT BY WILL THE FOLLOWING LEGACIES DUTY FREE
[Here follows a long list of legacies]
FOUR LEGACIES HAVING BECOME VOID
BY THE
STATUTE OF MORTMAIN,
SIR JOHN SEWELL, L.L.D.,
of Cumberland Street, Portman Square, London,
THE RESIDUARY LEGATEE, IN FURTHERANCE OF THE
TESTATOR'S WISHES, CAUSED THE SAME TO BE
CARRIED INTO FULL EFFECT; AND AT HIS DEATH,
IN 1833, BEQUEATHED £100 TO THE ALMSHOUSES
AT PRESCOT, AND £100 TO THOSE AT WINDSOR.

This tablet was erected by desire of the
aforesaid SIR JOHN SEWELL, as a tribute of
respect to his relative's great worth, and
as a memorial to after generations of his
humane and very liberal disposition towards
the Poor, and of his great desire for promoting
the Holy Protestant Religion.¹

R. BAKER. LPOOL.

1.—See Notes on the Vicars of Prescott.

On the north wall of the same aisle a white marble tablet on black marble:—

SACRED

to the memory of

THOMAS GILL,

who died March 11th, 1788,

aged 66 years.

Also of SARAH GILL, his wife,

who died Nov^r. 14th, 1821, aged 90 years.

Also of the Revd. JOHN RIGBY GILL, B.A.,

Son of the above,

who died Sep^r. 11th, 1793,

aged 40 years.

Also of THOMAS GILL, M.D.,

who died May 8th, 1792, aged 29 years.

Also of SARAH GILL,

who died Nov^r. 13th, 1832, aged 61 years.

Also of ELIZABETH GILL,

who died August 17th, 1836,

aged 80 years.

Also of SARAH RIGBY GILL,

eldest daughter

of John Rigby Gill and Mary his wife,

who died July 21st, 1818,

aged 36 years.

Also of MARY GILL,

wife of JOHN RIGBY GILL,

who died August 28th, 1833,

aged 82 years.

Also of ELIZABETH GILL,

second daughter

of John Rigby Gill,

who died July 27th, 1837,

aged 49 years.

[Following on foot of tablet.]

ALSO of MARY GILL, youngest daughter

of the REV^d. JOHN RIGBY GILL,

who died 9th day of September,

1845, aged 54 years.

Mr. Thomas Gill was a surgeon in Prescott, and was the son of Robert Gill, of Hale (proprietor of the Dungeon Saltworks), where the family had resided for several generations. His elder son, the Reverend John Rigby Gill, B.A., ordained in 1777, was incumbent of Kirkby from 1786 to 1793.

On the same wall, a white marble tablet on black marble, with an urn at the top:—

Sacred

to the memory of

JANE CHORLEY

who died on the 12th of March 1825

in the 57th year of her age.

Also of MARY CHORLEY

who died on the 13th of July 1837

aged 66 years.

And of ELIZABETH CHORLEY

who died on the 12th of February 1822

in her forty-sixth year.

*This Tablet is erected
in affectionate remembrance of them
by their surviving Sister.*

FRANCES CHORLEY, WHO DIED 30TH JUNE, 1849, AGED 74.

D. BAKER AND SON,
LIVERPOOL.

Next to this, a grey marble tablet on black marble, with an urn above. In the centre an oval in frame, all of white marble. The oval is inscribed:—

Sacred to the Memory
of

JOHN CHORLEY,
who died April 21st, 1807, aged 66 years.

And of JANE CHORLEY his Wife,
who died June 21st, 1798, aged 59 years.

In whose Death the Poor lament the loss
of kind Benefactors,
and their Children,
that of the most affectionate Parents.

At foot on a wreath a hawk's head erased.

A notable feature of the Church are some old stone escutcheons let into the interior walls. The seats in the Church appear to have been freeholds, and the holders of seats had the right of placing their coats of arms above their pews. These escutcheons are as follows:—

On the wall of the North aisle at the East end:

Arms: Argent a griffin segreant Sable armed Or.

Crest: Out of a ducal coronet Gules a griffin's head
Sable wings displayed Or.

R B 1610

These are the arms of Richard Bold, of Bold, who married Anne, daughter of Sir Peter Legh, of Lyme, and died in 1633. Frances, one of his daughters, married Henry Ogle, of Whiston. For a full account of the family of the Bolds of Bold see *Baine's History of Lancashire*.

On the North wall of the nave above Eastern-most arch:—

Arms: Argent a cross Sable in the dexter chief a fleur-de-lys. Gules. Eccleston. Impaling on a fesse 3 escallops. []

Crest: A magpie proper.

E. E. 1610
M. E.

The arms of Edward Eccleston, Lord of the Manor of Eccleston, and of his wife Mary. He gave £100 and an acre of land to build a new school-house for the free school at Prescot. He died 23 January, 1624, and according to the Prescot Registers was buried at St Jones in London.

On the South wall of the nave above the Eastern-most arch:—

Arms: Quarterly 1 and 4 Argent a saltire Gules. Gerard of Bryn.

2 and 3 Azure a lion rampant Ermine crowned Or. Gerard (ancient).

Crest: A lion rampant Ermine crowned Or.

16 10
Sr T. G Kt.

The arms and crest of Sir Thomas Gerard of Bryn, who was created a Baronet by King James I. in the year 1611, on the first day of the institution of the Order. The price of the patent, £1,000, was remitted on account of the sufferings of his father, who, having been accused of a design to liberate Mary, Queen of Scots, had been committed to the Tower, and compelled to sell some of his estates and mortgage others before he could obtain his liberty. Sir Thomas was Lord of the Manor of Windle in the Parish of Prescot. He died at Westminster in February, 1621.

A little to the West of the above:—

Arms: Quarterly 1 and 4 Argent a fesse between 3 crescents Gules. Ogle.

2 and 3 Azure an orle Argent. Bertram.

Crest: A bull's head erased sable horned Or.

1610

The arms of John Ogle of Whiston Hall in the Parish of Prescott. He married Elizabeth, daughter of Thomas Standish of Duxbury. His grandson Henry distinguished himself at the memorable defence of Lathom House.

One of his ancestors married the heiress of the Bertram family, and thus brought Bothal Castle and vast possessions into the family.

A little to the West of the above:—

Arms: Argent 3 bunches of wheat Vert.

Crest: A leopard's head Or. cut through with a scimitar proper, hilted and studded, of the first

F. W.

These arms were granted to Francis Watmough of Miclehead, in the County of Lancashire, by patent dated 17th Jany. 1602. Francis Watmough was related to the Hollands of Sutton Hall and the Gerards of Ince. He married Jane, daughter of John Barnes of Bold. The Court Rolls of the Manor show that he was a landed proprietor in the Parish of Prescott.

On the wall of the South aisle, in the East corner:—

Arms: Quarterly of eight, encircled with the garter with the motto *HONI SOIT QUI MAL Y PENSE*, and surmounted with an earl's coronet.

1. Argent on a bend Azure 3 stag's heads cabossed Or. Stanley.

2. Or. on a chief indented Azure 3 plates Lathom.
3. Gules 3 legs conjoined in the fesse point, in Armour proper, garnished and spurred Or. Isle of Man.
4. Checky Or. and Azure. Warren.
5. Gules 2 lions passant in pale Argent. Strange of Knockyn.
6. Argent a fesse and a canton conjoined Gules. Woodville.
7. Or. a cross engrailed Sable. Mohun.
8. Azure a lion rampant Argent. Montalt.

The arms of William 6th Earl of Derby K.G., who purchased the Isle of Man from his nieces, the daughters and co-heiresses of Ferdinand, the 5th Earl of Derby. William married Elizabeth Vere (26th June, 1594), sister and co-heiress of the 18th Earl of Oxford. His wife's arms are not impaled, all the eight quarterings being ancestral. Elizabeth Vere was the eldest daughter of Edward, 17th Earl of Oxford, by Anne Cecil, daughter of the great Lord Burleigh, and became the mother of James, 7th Earl of Derby, who was murdered at Bolton for being in arms for the King. In allusion to his ancestry, when his mangled remains were placed in the coffin, a slip of paper with the following couplet was thrown in:—

“Bounty, witt, courage here in one lye dead,
A Stanley's hand, Vere's heart, and Cecil's head.”

These arms are carved on marble which had been painted over several times with the rest of the Church walls. On scraping them it was discovered that originally they had been painted in heraldic colours. Through the generosity of Lady Derby they have now been cleaned and painted in the original colours.

A little to the West:—

Arms: Quarterly. 1 and 4. Argent 3 rush-hills Vert. Tyldesley.

2. Argent a chief Gules in middle chief a crescent of the first. Worsley.

3. Sable 3 garbs or wheatsheaves Or. Birkenhead.

Impaling: Quarterly Argent and Gules in the 2nd and 3rd quarters a fret Or. over all on a fesse sable 3 mullets Argent. Norreys of Orford.

Crests: A pelican in her nest feeding her young.

A wolf's head erased Or. holding in his mouth a fish

T. T. A.^r

These are the arms of Thomas Tyldesley Esquire of Wardley, and afterwards knighted. Sir Thomas Tyldesley of Gray's Inn, Attorney-General for Lancashire, had Orford in right of his wife, who was Anne, daughter and sole heir of Thomas Norreys of Orford, nigh Warrington, he died 1635; Norreys of Orford bore the same arms as Norreys of Speke, with the addition of 3 mullets on the fesse. His grand and great-grandfather occupied the position of Receiver-General for the Isle of Man to the Earls of Derby, and he himself according to an indenture made 13 Feby. 1610, together with a certain Thomas Orme purchased from Sir Thomas Bold the Manor of Great Sankey which later by Deed of 22 Aug. 1612, the said Thomas Orme released his rights to Thomas Tyldesley, who was there-upon sole seized of the said Manor, &c., in fee.

The last escutcheon on the South side is a hard sandstone and bears the following:—

Arms: Argent a chevron between 3 hedgehogs Sable.
Byrom.

Impaling: Azure a lion rampant Ermine, crowned Or.
Gerard of Ince.

Crest: A hedgehog Sable.

H. B.

M. B.

1610

These are the arms of Henry Byrom of Byrom in this county, who died at Parr 16 Apr. 1613, seized of Byrom and the Manor of Parr and much other property, he married Mary, one of the Gerards of Ince, his son John died 2 May 1611 at Parr in his father's lifetime, but John's son Henry was slain at the battle of Kineton (Edgehill) on the 23rd of October 1642, being then Major to the Regiment of Foot under Richard, Lord Molyneux on the King's side. The fact of being Lord of the Manor of Parr, in the ancient parish of Prescott, will account for the presence of these arms in the Church.

The Byroms of Kersall branched from those of Byrom and produced the celebrated John Byrom the poet. Byrom Hall eventually came into the hands of the Kersall branch and in 1838 on the death of Eleanora daughter of Edward Byrom, it passed to her niece Miss Atherton of Kersall Cell, near Manchester, previously of Prescott, who died September 12th 1870, when the bulk of her property in accordance with the provisions of her will passed to her god-son Mr. Edward Fox who assumed the surname and arms of Byrom.

There are three old brass plates in the Church found among a lot of rubbish, which have now been replaced

as near their original positions as possible. They are all on the walls of the chancel, two on the North side and one on the South. They are inscribed as follows:—

*Here lyeth (expecting the second
coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus
Christ) the body of*

JOHN PARR

*late of Prescott, who was borne att
Rainford in the year 1620, and
exchanged this temporall life for a
life eternall the tenth day of Novemb.,
in the year of our lord god, 1667.*

Kde + Scul.

The second:—

HERE LYETH THE BODY OF
IOHN HOULT WHO DEPARTED
THIS NATURALL LIFE THE 13TH
DAY OF FEBRUARY 1685
AS ALSO THE BODY OF ALICE
HOULT HIS DAUGHTER WHO DE-
PARTED THIS NATURALL LIFE
THE 7TH OF IULY 1699
HERE LYETH THE BODY OF ION
HURST WHO DEPARTED THIS NA-
TURALL LIFE THE 3^D OF NOVEMBER
1702.

The third runs thus:—

HERE - LYETH - THE - BODY - OF - WILLIAM
 MIDGLEY - SON - OF - WILLIAM - MIDGLEY - OF
 PRESCOTT - WHO - DEPARTED - THIS - LIFE
 THE - 26 - DAY - OF - DECEMBER - 1730.
 AGED - 3 - YEARS - AND - 8 - MONTHS:
 WM - MIDGLEY - DEPARTED - THIS - LIFE - SEPTEMBER
 THE - 8 - 1733 - IN - THE - 47 - YEAR - OF - HIS - AGE:
 ROBERT - BENITS - TWOO - SONS - DYED - IN - THE
 SECOND - YEAR - OF - THERE - AGE - 1739:
 ROBERT - BENIT - DEPARTED - THIS - LIFE - THE
 24 - IUNE - 1741 - IN - THE - 39 - YEAR - OF - HIS - AGE.

Just outside the door of the Clergy Vestry is a board
 of black oak in a frame, painted as follows, in gold:—

Jacobi [Here a skull and crossbones] filii.

Jacobi Pemberton

de Halswood

quod claudi potuit

hic jacet

Obiit 22 Feb. A Dni. 1655

Aetatis Suae 84

Et Georgii filii Jacobi Pemberton

Obiit 18 July A Dni. 1688

Aetatis Suae 80

Nec non

Annae filiae Georgii Pemberton

Obiit 24 Junii A Dni. 1690

Aetatis Suae 18.

APPENDIX.

IN THE NAME OF GOD AMEN Whereas certain difficult debates and sharp controversies have lately happened between the parishioners that hear divine Service and receive the Sacraments in the Mother Church of Prescott in our diocese of Chester and other Parishioners of the said Church that hear divine Service and receive the Sacraments in the Chapell of Farnworth in the said Parish of Prescott and a dependant upon the said Mother Church about their Contribution to the repair and use of the said Mother Church and being Judicially depending moved and contraverted between Edward Finney, Thomas Cooper, Henry Lyon, and John Sutton, Wardens of the said Mother Church of Prescott on the one part and John Wright and William Bly and Gilbert Banke Wardens of the said Chapell of Farnworth of the other part And whereas as well the Wardens and other Parishioners of the said Mother Church of Prescott as the Wardens and other Parishioners that hear divine Service and receive the Sacraments in the Chapell of Farnworth aforesaid to determine and put an end to the differences did come before us JOHN by divine permission Bishop of Chester as Ordinary and did intirely and wholly yield and submit themselves in this respect unto us and thereupon did show and exhibit a certain DECREE or order of Constitution bearing date the fifth day of the month of August in the Year of our Lord one thousand five hundred and fiftyfive made by the right Reverend Father in God George by divine permission some time Bishop of Chester and Inrolled amongst his Acts the tenor of which said order follows—

TO ALL the Sons of Holy Mother Church whom the underwritten do relate concern or in time to come may concern George by divine permission Bishop of Chester sends greeting in our Lord everlasting Know that we

Recites
differences
with the
Chapelry

About the
repairs
of the
Mother
Church

To put an
end to
which

After
reciting
a decree
of 1555,

the aforesaid George Bishop have seen and read a certain decree for and concerning the amending and repairing of the Parish Church of Prescott and the enclosure of the Churchyard and Ornaments and other necessities to the said Parish Church of Prescott appertaining and belonging which was produced before us by the discreet men James Watmough, Ralph Haughton, Evan Pike, Churchwardens of the said Church and by the Major part of the Parishioners the fifth day of the month of August in the Year of our Lord one thousand five hundred and fifty-five in our Cathedral Church of Chester the tenor of which Order is as follows

MEMORANDUM Whereas certain troublesome controversies have arisen between the Parishioners that hear divine Service in the Mother Church of Prescott on the one part and other Parishioners of the said Church that hear divine Service and receive the Sacraments in the Chapel of Farnworth in the said Parish of Prescott and dependant upon the said Church upon and concerning the amending and repairing of divers decays of the said Mother Church of Prescott did at length appear before us Richard Buddeswall Archdeacon of Chester executing the Office of Visitation in the Church of Prescott aforesaid on Monday next after the feast of the Nativity of Saint John Baptist in the Year of our Lord One thousand two hundred and ninety-one William de Birchall, Robert de Appleton, Richard the son of Hull, William de Asbrooke and William de Upton Dike de Snape, Henry de le Law, Henry de Kenion, Alexander de Pulton, Richard the son of Hull, Richard Ball, John de Denton, William de Bold Clerk and Richard Shaw on their behalfs and others that hear divine Service in the said Chapel of Farnworth and others also that hear divine Service in the Mother Church of Prescott aforesaid sufficiently appearing did Assert that the Parishioners that hear divine Service in the Chapel of Farnworth and their Predecessors are and

In which is recited an order made in the year 1291,

By which the Parishioners of the Chapelry admit that they are liable to certain repairs, &c., of the Mother Church

hitherto have been Parishioners of the Mother Church and Confessed that they antiently have contributed together with the rest of the Parishioners to the necessities thereof and did voluntarily and Judicially confess that they will henceforward lay out or contribute to the Charge of Books and Ornaments and Bread and to the reparation and amendments of the Mounds of the Church Yard and Bells and Supplying of other wants and all other Burthens incumbent on the said Mother Church of Prescott as well in greater as smaller charges together and in proportion with other Parishioners of the said Church of Prescott And because it is Judicially Manifest unto us the said Richard Archdeacon of Chester as well by our other Visitations there and in the Neighbouring places (P. Vices) made that it is public and Notorious that the said Chapel of Farnworth is situate Within the Parish of Prescott afore-said and is a dependant upon the Parish Church as also by this present Visitation and by the Confession of other faithfull persons that hear divine Service in the Chapel of Farnworth that the same is in the said Parish and that they have been accustomed to contribute to the repairs and deficiencies of the same We according to our duty and by Authority of the Law ordain and Judicially Pronounce and finally declare that they and all other Parishioners of the said Church of Prescott ought henceforward to Contribute without Contradiction to the Charges of repairing amending or doing the same and do decree them to do the same In testimony whereof to this present Memorandum we have caused our Seal to be putt dated at Childwall the day and year above Written And because it is sufficiently manifest and attested that the said Church of Prescott by the default of the Inhabitants on Farnworth side and other Parishioners of the said Mother Church of Prescott there is so great ruins and deformities and delapidations in the

It is declared that all the Parishioners shall contribute to the charges of repairing, &c.

roofs Ornaments Walls and Windows that unless speedy remedy be taken the said Church is in a short time likely to fall down to the Ground THEREFORE WE the said George by divine permission Bishop of Chester Willing (as we are in duty bound) to provide by Course of Law for the deformities and decays of the said parish Church with the Consent of the Churchwardens and Parishioners of the said Mother Church of Prescott aforesaid being Judicially before us and praying a seasonable remedy in the premises WE do confirm and corroborate the said decree by virtue of these presents And do hereby decree and order that henceforward the Parishioners aforesaid on some Sunday or Festival between the feast of Saint Michael the Arch Angel and the feast of All Saints Whereof Public Notice to be always given by the Vicar of the said Church or his deputy there shall be a meeting at the said Church of Prescott and by the Consent of all or the Major part then present at least eight honest men of the said parish shall be elected Viz. at least One in every Village which eight men so elected or the major part of them shall have authority for that Year in which they shall be so elected of hearing and approving or disapproving and disallowing and also of determining the accounts of the churchwardens for the time being. And the said Churchwardens shall publicly make in the said Church in the presence of all that have a mind to be then present a full and faithfull account Yearly on some Sunday betwixt the feast of All Saints and Saint Catharine to be appointed by the said eight men and to be publicly proclaimed by the Curate of the parish in the said parish Church and after such account so as aforesaid heard and determined the said eight men or the major part of them shall within ten days next after the feast of Saint Catharine nominate and elect the same or other honest men of the said parish to execute the said office

Con-
firmation
thereof.

Further
decree.

Eight
men
to be
chosen,

Who are
to
examine
the
Church-
wardens'
Accounts

And
appoint
new
Church-
wardens.

of Churchwardens and if any of the parishioners so to be named and elected by the said eight men or the major part of them shall refuse and decline to take upon them the said Office of Churchwardens so they be not compelled to it twice within three years they shall pay to the use of the said Church two shillings And moreover be liable to Ecclesiastical punishment And moreover the said eight men or the major part of them shall Tax and Assess each of the Inhabitants and Parishioners according to their Estates Possessions and abilities what they shall pay and contribute to the amendments and repairs of the said Mother Church and to the deficiencies of the Ornaments of the same And if any of the Parishioners or Inhabitants in the parish shall without reasonable cause refuse or delay to pay to the the churchwardens the said sum by the said eight men as aforesaid indifferently assessed taxed and appointed to be applyed to the use of the said Church after Canonical admonition that then it is our will that they and every one of them who shall rashly transgress this our decree shall be (*ipso facto*) excommunicated until they shall comply with the premises which we do hereby command to be denounced by the Vicar or dean rural (for the time being) of Warrington which said Vicar and dean we do hereby depute and ordain Jointly and severally faithfully to put this our decree in Execution with all the remedy and compulsion of the Church And because we have certain Intelligence that the Inhabitants on Farnworth side and other places in which there are Chapels erected within the precincts of the said parish they are more tardy and negligent in contributing to their said Mother Church of Prescot because they have divine Service celebrated in the same Chapels wherefore WE injoin and command you the said Vicar and dean Jointly and severally that on our behalfs Ye admonish all and every the Inhabitants in the said

The eight men to make an equal Rate throughout the Parish.

Villages where such Chapels have been and are situate whom we do also by the tenor of these presents Admonish that they give assistance to the necessities of the said Mother Church according to the Assessments and tax of the said eight men to be Chosen as aforesaid or otherwise that the said Chapells and Oratories whose Inhabitants and the Villages within the same which shall unjustly withhold the taxes from the said Church of Prescott we will that they shall be (*ipso facto*) Suspended and Interdicted from the Celebration of divine Service in the same untill the said Inhabitants shall Contribute in all things to the said Mother Church as they are bound to do Inhibiting all and singular Chaplains that they do not presume during such Suspension to celebrate in the said Chapels under the penalty of the Law all and every one of such premises WE GEORGE by divine permission Bishop of Chester aforesaid at the humble Supplication petition and request of the said James Watmough Ralph Houghton and Evan Pike Church Wardens of Prescott so as aforesaid elected WE do approve ratify and corroborate and confirm by these presents IN TESTIMONY whereof we have hereunto put our Seal Dated at Chester the fifth day of the month of August in the Year of Our Lord one thousand five hundred and fifty-five and in the second year of our Consecration AND WHEREAS in the said Constitution Ordinance or decree some Ambiguous and obscure things and others are found not to be so convenient at this time and to the present affairs of the Church WE therefore being desirous to take away such Ambiguities and to amend what seems to us to be inconvenient and as much as in us lies to put an end to all differences by and with the Consent and Assent of the Wardens of the Mother Church of Prescott aforesaid as well on their own behalf as of the rest of the Parishioners of the said Mother Church AND ALSO

Date 1555.

The foregoing decree explained and altered in some respects.

by and with the Consent and Assent of the said Wardens of the Chapel of Farnworth aforesaid as well on their own behalfs as of all and every the Parishioners that hear divine Service and receive the Sacraments in the said Chapell of Farnworth for the explaining expounding and amending of the Order or decree aforesaid WE do hereby order and decree that the said eight men shall be chosen by and with the Consent of all and every or at least of the greater and more sound part of the Parishioners as well of that part of the said parish which is called Farnworth side as of that part of the said parish which is called Prescott side who have a mind to be present at the time appointed by the said decree of the said GEORGE our predecessor and when the usual time of choosing the eight men shall draw near the Vicar of Prescott for the time being or his Deputy on a Sunday at least a fortnight before the said election in the time of Morning prayer shall give publick Notice thereof to the people and the Church Wardens or some of them shall take care that Notice be given of such election to be had to the Curate of Farnworth (if there be any at that time) that the said Curate may give public Notice to the Inhabitants of Farnworth side on Sunday next before (in the Chapel of Farnworth) of such election so to be had that every one that has a mind may be present in the said Church of Prescott at the said election and when the day of Election shall Come WE order and decree that after evening prayer on that day the people shall meet in the said Church of Prescott and the Vicar for the time being or his representative shall propose and name to them eight men to be elected in manner aforesaid But if any of the Inhabitants would rather have any other to be elected any such parishioner who shall be then present may propose the name of such person and of those which shall be so named those eight men who shall have the greater number of Votes of the

As to the
choice of
the eight
men.

Vicar
propose
persons
for the
eight men.

The others
may be
proposed
by the
Parishioners

Six to be appointed for Prescot and two for Farnworth side.

Who, with the Vicar, are to examine the Churchwardens' Accounts in the presence of such Parishioners as choose to attend

On Easter Tuesday,

And at the same time the eight men are to elect new Churchwardens.

Date
15 Janry,
1619.

Parishioners and Inhabitants who shall be then present shall be elected eight men for that year And we do ordain and appoint that of these eight men Six of them shall for ever hereafter be yearly elected out of that part of the parish that is called Prescot side and two of them out of that part of the parish that is called Farnworth side and that these eight men so chosen or the Major part of them with the Vicar of Prescot for the time being in the presence of as many of the Parishioners as have a mind to be present shall hear examine and determine the Accounts of the Churchwardens for the time being of the said Mother Church of Prescot on Tuesday next after Easter Sunday yearly And the said eight men or the Major part of them shall there upon the said Easter Tuesday elect new Church Wardens according to the canon in that case made and provided in the Year of our Lord one thousand six hundred and Three And moreover we do as much as in us lies and we legally may approve ratify corroborate and Confirm by these presents the said decree or Ordinance or Constitution of our said predecessor in this our decree or Ordinance inserted (saving nevertheless those things which by us the said John Bishop of Chester in this our said decree ordinance or Constitution are altered or explained) AND moreover it is our Will that this our declaration and explanation of the Ordinance or decree aforesaid shall be engrossed and registered amongst the Acts of our Consistory Court of Chester IN TESTIMONY whereof we caused our Episcopal Seal to be hereunto put Dated at Wigan the fifteenth day of the Month of January in the Year of our Lord according to the computation of the Church of England One Thousand six hundred and nineteen and in the first Year of our Consecration.

JO CESTRIEN.

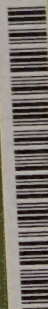
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